



THE BASICS OF DIGITAL BUSINESS PLANNING FOR ENTREPRENEURS & SMALL BUSINESSES

“I don’t believe in Digital Marketing, I believe in Marketing in a Digital World, and that’s a huge difference!”

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Introduction:

To market your business in the digital world there are 4 main areas of focus, which are:

1. Design – Do your customers recognize you instantly? Do customers easily understand you and know what's in it for them? Do you have a call to action they can easily act on?
2. Decisiveness - Do you have a viable digital business strategy, sales funnel, automation and a process to nurture leads?
3. Development - Do you get what you want from your digital production? Is your digital presence giving your customers what they want and/or need? Is your price competitive and fair?
4. Distribution - Is your content where it needs to be to make you money? Is the process automated? Is it paying off?

Talk about being fortunate! I spent a few years in Mumbai (Bombay), India setting up digital marketing agencies for North American agencies to outsource to on behalf of themselves or their clients. During that time, I learned that the basics NEVER change!

On Facebook there is a page called "People of Bombay." I read a story about a couple who wanted to travel, they had a tea stand, they saved all of their Rupees and over their years they went to 7 different countries and loved every minute of it!

What does this have to do with digital marketing or business development? A cup of tea in Mumbai may cost you 4 or 5 rupees so you can buy as many as 12 cups of tea for one Canadian dollar. It's not a lot of money, what's amazing are the basic principles of entrepreneurship and business they displayed.

This couple knew what they wanted in life AND they knew what they wanted from their business. They used the information available to them to calculate what it would take to reach their goals. They made agreements with property managers, they sold their tea to offices close to their stand, they used inexpensive paper cups which they included in their prices, their overhead was a trolley they moved at will and they just kept their basics simple. The end result is they reached their goals 10 times over and are very happy!

As business owners we often forget to focus on what we want or why we would have goals in the first place. It's not uncommon to reach outside our goals. When we do, we occasionally get lost or feel we have failed because we didn't exceed what we set out to achieve.

When you know what you want, narrow your focus, learn the basics required AND you keep those basics intact, you will be able to reach your goal.

Watching the tea makers and the street vendors in Mumbai made me realize that most people forget to focus on the basics, stay the course towards their initial goal, attain that goal and THEN set their sights in new directions or higher. That is where I got the idea to put together this guide which gives you the core elements that have helped hundreds reach success in their businesses.

This booklet gives you my vision in action, and we'll go deeper into the content as we go along. Everything you need to make digital waves is here, including resources.

Branding – What is it? Why is it important? What difference does it make? Why is everyone talking about it?

1 Design | Knowing, Communicating and Selling Through Your Brand!

BRAND:

Branding has been around for centuries as a means to differentiate between the goods of one firm from those of another. In fact, the word brand is derived from the Old Norse word 'brandr,' which means "to burn."

Branding can be defined as the "Entire process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product (goods or services) in the consumers' mind, through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme. Branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers." (Businessdictionary.com 2009).

One of the most distinctive skills of professional marketers is their ability to create, maintain, protect and enhance brands. It is the cornerstone of Marketing. The American Marketing Association defines a brand as: 'a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.' (Kotler P 2003).

Strong brand equity provides the organization with a more predictable income stream and source. It increases the cash flow for the firm by helping it to increase its market share, reducing promotion related costs and allows premium pricing.

What are 3 Brands Competing with yours and what is the USP (Unique Selling Proposition) of each?

Competing Brand:

Competing USP:

Establishing Your Brand:

Beginning well is the first prerequisite for an impressive final product. This is where we consult with you to ensure your best results for your business; you can also refer to the handy infographic below:

Selecting a Color Scheme:

Everything looks better in color. The only criterion is making a choice with precision and passion. Our team will assist you to select stunning and/or unusual color combinations, and will ensure our creativity makes your brand stand out to your customers and competitors. See this [article](#).

The Correct Use of Color Theory

An artist's palette does not contain colors; it is filled with emotions. Your website or blog is not expected to apply one color and you probably never even thought about a degree in color theory, so what colors should you use with your primary choice?



Color is uncontainable. The colors you use in your marketing campaign should be the element that will grab the attention of the consumer. While there is no such thing as a right or wrong color, there are colors that can enhance the message you wish to impart, and impression you want to create.

First, enter the URL's of your top 3 competitors, then list their color choices (use the guidance on the following page to select the colors that you feel best represent your brand).

What are the 3 brands competing with yours and what are the core color choices of each?

Competing Brand:

Color Choices:

We suggest a blend of following colors for your brand:

White and Grey – White is absolute. Calm, poise, purity and safety are what you associate with white. Grey is noiselessly powerful. Neutral greys epitomize feelings of elegance, pragmatism, and harmony. Black or white are always an assured and efficient accent. They make the primary colors shine brighter when used as an emphasis. When used exclusively, they give off an institutionalized or sterile feeling.

Blue – The only color that maintains its original character in all its tones and hues, blue is seen as trustworthy, dependable and faithful. It's associated with peace, serenity, and stability. Most of the major conservative brands use blue to promote trust in their products and build a persuasive bond with their consumers. You'll see a lot of technological and IT companies using blue.

A number of researchers expect that changing your background color to blue will trigger belief, faith and trust, and thus increase conversions by 31%. The ocean is blue, the sky is blue, police sirens are blue, and the president wears a blue suit. Even a cursory glance in your wardrobe and you'll be surprised on the amount of blue there!

Any news program has a navy blue theme – they need credibility more than anything else to stay in business. Light greys are a close second and good as well. Use blue as much as you can when you are stating facts.

Black – Symbolizes luxury, authority, power, elegance, and strength. Black is commonly used by high-end designer clothing brands and car manufacturers.

What are your brand core color choices and where are they currently in use if they are?

Color Choices for your Brand:

Current use of your brand Color Choices:

Finding Your Authentic Brand Voice:

Businesses realize they can grow exponentially if they can throw off the corporate facades and open up to their customers. The customer wants to see the people behind that make-believe world. They want to speak with brands as friends, and expect them to listen and talk with them rather than preaching to them.

You can feel this in marketing, social media, even when you call them. Big and small brands are progressively discarding the automated script and are adapting a responsive tone to connect better. They want you to see them as someone with a distinct personality the customer can relate to.

You don't need to look any further than your nearest mall or even on your screens. Starbucks is on Twitter with Katy Perry, trying to build a rapport in a fun manner, Jet Blue wants you to "jet with them" while its competitors are still struggling with inane airlines jargon!

Even established ones such as Southwest, IBM, and IKEA speak in a refreshing, honest, and simple way. From takeaways to solar power companies, brands are using simpler words that immediately connect in an empathetic - often witty, manner. In short, they want to be perceived as a human with all its imperfections but willing to improve.

Even Coca-Cola, see their communication with me when I was crossing India by train:

How can a brand define its personality? Most companies start with advertising and marketing. An engaging ad campaign inspires and builds an opening. But it can't stop there.

For Apple, "Think Different" is not just a catchphrase. They delivered in every aspect of their experience from the product to its environment, from the store to their after-sales. Ads are simply the tip of the iceberg. They are omnipresent, though fashion only a small part of creating a personality.



The action happens in your everyday interactions and exchanges. The customer builds your personality gradually based on his experience with your company. Automated recordings, long waits while waiting to connect with someone, difficult to understand fine print, impenetrable customer service, all of these are cumulative and outline brand perceptions, or personality.

Relationships are not built with a big bang; they are built with many small touches on a regular basis. When companies take the time to text a message about shipping, giving you delivery options, remind you of your car service due date, and using witty one-liners as part of marketing can help a brand considerably.

Carefully including these everyday moments drives your business. The Go Online Marketing Brand Study shows that leaders who connect in a more human way have a 20% greater approval rating with their customers. And they've paid 11 percent more each year to their shareholders over four years.

But besides the long-term benefit, there's an immediate payoff to being more human. Simple design and tone changes to archaic communications can increase understanding by 30 percent or more. This, in turn, creates many authentic and surprising benefits.

Changes big and small can add up to many millions of dollars in savings or incremental revenues. Simply using more humane language in a friendly tone and incorporating considerate design changes proved a significant catalyst for an organization in regaining customer trust. The revenues generated an annual

savings of \$950,000. Clarity, honesty and simplicity resulted in eliminating redundant communications, preventing returns by careful planning, and reducing complaints.

People speak and talk through conversations, unlike scripted corporate memos. They say sorry, they want to hear 'thank-you.' They want to be respected for what they are and this can be done by using good etiquette.

Successful brands who stand out have the courage to:

1. Simplify
2. Show genuine empathy
3. Treat others equally
4. Show uncommon openness
5. Embrace personality

Which of the 5 categories above apply to your business?

Simplify:

Do you have the courage to throw out 80% of what you want to say? Leonardo Di Vinci said, "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

Simple often isn't so simple. But it's absolutely indispensable in order to cut through the clutter. Newspaper editors know only one out of five people will read past the headline. So they try to slot in the gist in those few words. It makes perfect sense in this over-informed world of today where information is often ignored.

Editing ruthlessly requires a deep understanding of what people actually want to hear. Once you learn that, magic can happen. For example, a retail bank branch reduced the clutter of its signs and messages by 80%. The result was customers recalled more of its messages.

What can you remove from your copy to be clearer in your communication?

Home page of Website:

Company Social Media Profile:

Show Genuine Empathy:

Can you shift every interaction from trying to convince and influence to trying to help?

Most businesses are still talking at people rather than with them. They're intention is to coax, sell, and persuade. But every communication can be an opportunity to simply help, too. The online loan application can tell you how many steps you have left to go. The wireless contract can suggest all your options. And the "payment due" alert can advise you how to manage your bills better. These are small gestures, but they're what people really want.

It starts with thinking like a customer and learning what they want. A tax site makes it easy to see how far you've gone with your e-filing with a progress tracker. If you exit without finishing, they'll prompt you to get help or save and set a reminder to return. Zappos and Ally Bank both keep their customer support phone number at the top of their sites, displaying a rare knowledge of the consumer mindset. They know if someone needs support, he will immediately open the website, and locating the number without searching builds trust like few things can. Such small gestures win loyalty, even affection over the competition.

What are 3 key ways your brand empathizes with your audience? Where do you express that empathy?

3 key empathy points:	Where your brand employs that empathy point:

Treat Others Equally:

Can you abandon the jargon and use easy-to-understand words?

Regardless of you call it, studies show corporate jargon is frustrating. In fact, nearly half of us will stop reading, stop listening, walk away, click away, or tune out as soon as it's used.

The simple solution: step out of the boardroom and onto the street. Think like your customers.

Take the online bank Simple, for example. They call a customer's balance "safe-to-spend," versus the austere "available funds" typically reported by the competition. A fashion shop advertises "good jobs for good people" rather than the barren "now hiring hourly associates." ConEdison cleverly but lovingly laments "I used to be a tree :(" on envelopes containing printed statements. Yes, the emoticon is for real!

This shift is happening everywhere. Yet tech companies still cling to words like "extreme" and "turbo-powered," mobile companies herald their "LTE" networks, and health insurers lean on their "HMOs and ACOs." Obfuscation is a big word and a not-so-nice way of communicating.

Big confusing words might trick customers into giving you their business today — fine print always builds a chasm —it also builds suspicion instead of a long-term relationship. People love to stick with brands that tell them the truth, clearly and kindly.

What are 3 things your brand can rewrite for your audience?

Change this point:	To this point:

Show Uncommon Openness:

Will you let the customer inside your thinking process?

"I messed up. I owe everyone an explanation." Netflix cofounder and CEO Reed Hastings used real communication after a misguided decision to separate the company's DVD and streaming businesses. He earned his customers' trust by inviting them to the table and revealing his cards for everyone to see.

Just like a person, a brand's true character is often revealed in times of duress. Like Hastings', the best apologies are honest ones, and take remarkable courage. Sincere candor means setting aside ego and bringing customers into the conversation. McDonald's Canada launched a site allowing customers to ask them anything after it faced accusations of substandard food processing practices. Even provocative questions were answered thoughtfully.

Defensiveness as the weapon of choice is no longer accepted. When Lululemon's founder refused to take blame for his company's more than acceptable sheer yoga pants, and blamed the customer's thigh size, it was ludicrous. The customers revolted as a result.

What are 3 key ways your brand can be more open with your audience? Where/How?

3 key openness points:	Where your brand can share that openness:

Embrace Personality:

Have you discovered your brand's true character? You must learn what your customer wants in order to connect with them. What is your brand's backstory, its posture, its outlook on life? It's this exclusive personality that provides dimension and texture.

Imagine a cocktail party with the world's most iconic brands as guests. Tiffany floats down an elegant staircase in a dazzling powder-blue gown. Harley Davidson orders whiskey with a leathery growl. Maybelline flirts with the fresh-faced bartender while Volvo tries to coax Red Bull down from the chandelier.

Humans are not trees. They have motivations and emotions that are dynamic and lively. Your brand voice should be flexible to hold a wide breadth of emotions for a range of motivations and situations. Defining a set of characteristics is a great place to start, but more than a train of words, these qualities need to introduce the living character of a brand.

Businesses must create opportunities to build stories around their brands; stories that collectively build a complete series of mythology for its customers who can relate their lifestyle with them. Building communities of ardent customers turn them into fans and brand ambassadors with a zeal that inspires friends and family as much as it fires their imagination.

It is easier to define a brand's personality when you have a passionate user as founder. They know who the target is and this gives an advantage at the starting point itself. Airbnb, Virgin, Facebook are prime examples of companies that came out of nowhere to fulfill a missing need in the marketplace, and they knew who their targets were. The founders of these companies defined their brand in customers' minds and that set the tone for exponential growth.

If passion is not one of the strong points, there are other ways to determine the right character for your brand. A few introductory questions can help at the beginning of the journey. Can an individual or a group of persons represent what your brand is? Can you visualize your brand in a room full of well-heeled people? Once you get a handle on what your brand is, create a social profile. Male or Female? Age? Friends? Interests?

The challenge is huge. So are the benefits. When you stop preaching and start listening, you start the conversation. It's also important to know it must be authentic. If it's not, you customers will call you on it.

An ad campaign alone won't get you there if your actions don't back up your claims. Simply saying "trust me" does not bring as much conviction body language and unconscious gestures will tell the tale.

The bottom line is this: the road is demanding. You're going to build a culture from the lowest rung. You're to mobilize the entire staff across cities or countries or even continents. Fortunately, it's achievable. Major brands like Google, Vodafone, and Honda have made massive progress, and on an outstanding global scale.

What are 3 key locations your brand can establish its personality? How can you embed that offline?

3 key areas online:

3 key areas offline:

Here's how we advise companies, big and small, to find their brand voice:

- Change must come from within. Before we create a dossier on customer communications, we must change the way we speak with each other. When the HR memo is replaced with a smiley notice filled with bright colors, employees get the message that they have unwritten permission to connect in an easygoing way with customers.
- Involve the entire organization. Your brand voice belongs to everyone, not just to the marketing department. For it to reflect your cultural beliefs, your voice must find its way into hiring criteria, HR training programs, employee on-boarding and performance management.
- Start with a big ticket transformation. Dare to demonstrate your intention that shouts, "I am changing my voice." Demonstrate that on your website, weekly newsletter and/or complaint resolution messages. Big and bold changes spark a chain reaction leading to positive change and growth.
- Be consistent with your changes. Be brutally honest and you will reach the root of disappointment. See things from a customer's perspective. Examine your documents regularly to remove institutional expressions and replace them with simple words. Review your website for colors, layout, and navigation. Make things easier. Help your customer find you as easily as their best friends! Let your human voice replace corporate prattle.

Uncovering Your Brand Personality:

Spend 10 minutes, based on the information above, thinking about where your company is when it comes to these descriptors below. Place dots closest to wherever your company falls along the spectrum. Do not overthink this, and don't be afraid to envision where you'd like your company to be, even if it's not there now.

Based on your responses, use the key below to determine your company's overall voice:

Are most of your dots toward the left?

- Your company is contemporary, fast-moving and energetic.

BRAND PERSONALITY SPECTRUM	
Personable and friendly _____	Corporate, professional _____
Spontaneous, high energy _____	Careful thinking, planning _____
Modern or high tech _____	Classic and traditional _____
Cutting edge _____	Established _____
Fun _____	Serious _____
Accessible to all _____	Upscale _____

- You like to make ideas happen quickly, and you don't mind taking risks.
- Your communication style is friendly and approachable.

Are most of your dots toward the right?

- Your company is traditional, relies on solid planning and established ways of getting things done.
- You might be trying to appeal to upscale clientele, and your communication style is corporate and professional.

What Does It Mean?

Knowledge is power: defining these brand personality traits means you can apply them consistently in your verbal and visual communication. A clear vision of your brand personality will guide your choice of colors, typography, word, and actions.

A company that is traditional and established will use classic typefaces that have been around for centuries. The color palette chosen leans toward conservative, rich hues. The communication style is formal and corporate. This company's brand image stands the test of time. Because it relies on elements that have been in use for decades, the style will still look fresh five years from now.

A company that is contemporary and high energy will have colors, typography and a communication style that reflect this. The color palette might be vivid and trendy. The typefaces will have been released in the last ten years. The graphic style is open, airy and asymmetrical. The copywriting voice is friendly and approachable.

This company will likely have to re-make their image more often than the traditional one to stay ahead of visual trends.

What If Your Company is in-Between?

If your dots are mostly in the middle, I urge you to take a stand about how you'd like your brand personality to be perceived. When it comes to marketing your business, the middle is the worst place to be.

You're guaranteeing that your brand will be entirely forgettable, because it's not one thing or the other. The middle is Blandsville. Avoid it at all costs.

If your dots are all over the place, with some on one side, and some on the other, you have a quirky brand that doesn't fit easily into a box. That's good! Feel free to mix and match traits from the list above. You might use traditional typography and colors, but a very friendly and approachable copywriting style, for example. Uncover your style and let it shine! Every brand has a personality.

One personality isn't "better" than the other. Once you identify your company's brand personality you can use that knowledge in all the marketing work you do. Your communications will look and sound like they're coming from the same source over time, and your decisions about how to express your brand verbally and visually will be on target.

Remember I asked before this section: **Branding** – *What is it? Why is it important? What difference does it make? Why is everyone talking about Branding?*

If you are not clear about your identity, your offer, why you're offering it, and what you want in return, there is a values gap. Sales can't happen in a value gap so let's show you how to close that gap by looking at how you bring your brand to the world.

Creating a logo:

"A logo does not sell (directly), it identifies. A logo derives meaning from the quality of the thing it symbolizes, not the other way around."

People remember images more than words. So it becomes essential to have a logo that strikes an immediate chord with your prospects. Valuable logos capture the attention of prospects, are glued in the minds of current customers, and can play the largest part in turning one-time purchasers into loyal followers.

Sounds pretty impressive, right? Your business logo can do this, too—as long as you keep it:

Simple: You want your logo to be easily recognized. You'd never mistake Apple's distinct apple for any other fruit, even when racing past a billboard to catch an early morning flight.

Memorable: A memorable logo springs to mind at the mere mention of the company name—or, sometimes, even the product. Don't you remember a mermaid in green? Or the swoosh? Think of a doctor and the plus sign comes to mind, immediately.

Timeless: Timeless logos last for decades. Just consider Coca-Cola's stylish red script. The mark is almost the same as it was in 1885.

Versatile: One size should fit all. The best logos, like the Olympics' rings, are equally incredible in color, grayscale, black and white, or reverse print. They also work well at every size, whether printed on websites, blogs, social media channels, brochures, or even billboards.

Appropriate: The best logos "speak" to the right audience, effortlessly blending color, font, and graphics to communicate the spirit of the business. The McDonald's logo evokes memories of childish fun, while the Audi one channels a sense of achievement.

Your logo is the first impression you present to your clients, it's the face of the brand whether they browse your website or read your brochure or receive an email from your company. If it is anything, it has to be simple. We blend the five factors above to create marketing magic.

Consider the logos of 3 competing brands. What do they say to you visually? Textually?

Competing Brand:

Logo observations:

What are 3 messages your logo will represent about your brand according to you? Your Customers?

Key Features of your Brand:

3 Customer Comments about your brand:

WEBSITE AND LANDING PAGES

Most people expect that the design phase will begin with the website itself, though this is close to the final stage for us. Now that we know who we are going to engage with, why we are engaging and how we are going to engage, we can design a website that is 100% geared towards that specific purpose and will include everything necessary to meet your business goals.

We are well prepared to start the process of planning your point of connection with your customers, this is the **"head office" digitally speaking** of your business online and it deserves to represent your value esthetically and functionally.

We have already determined the look, voice and experience of your site and we need to tie that into the site design and business strategy of your website. Next, we select the best type of structure to house your digital business.

Based on customer experience, we know you will want to make some website changes yourself, such as change some text, add an image or some small edit. You might also notice an issue and want to change it quickly. Due to our belief in CMS's (Content Management Systems), you can quickly make changes on the back-end once you know what to do, with little or no assistance.



WordPress, Joomla and Drupal are the top three CMS products used by entrepreneurs and small business today with WordPress being the most user-friendly one according to feedback from customers.

We feel it is important to educate our customers about their digital products, while we act as your service providers. With that in mind please review the information below about CMS systems, it will help you understand what they are, how they work, and why we choose them.

What is a Content Management System?

A Content Management System (CMS) is a software for creating, editing, and maintaining online content.

It allows trained users from a non-technical background to update content on websites and intranets. At their simplest, a CMS enables users to input web content using a basic text editor.



CMS's can also allow users to upload different types of content - including text, pictures, records, blogs, video, syndicated feeds, and podcasts. When sourcing a CMS, it is important to make sure it can cope with the types of content you want to manage.

A CMS can be set up to support online marketing campaigns, and can be fully integrated with your customer relationship management system so that you can offer visitors a more personalized experience. A good CMS will also support your search marketing - helping to improve your search engine optimisation.

Content Management Systems (CMS's allow users to manage, monitor and update their websites easily. A website designed with a CMS can be accessed by authorised users who can add, edit and remove content using a straightforward series of screens (interface).

As well as managing your online content, a CMS can also support wider business objectives - including customer relationship management and online marketing.

Advantages of Using a Content Management System

There are a number of advantages to using a Content Management System (CMS), and these are not limited to websites which have regularly changing content. The main benefit of a CMS is that it enables website owners to keep their site fresh and up-to-date without needing detailed technical knowledge.

If carefully sourced and implemented, a CMS can help you:

- Reduce the cost of keeping your website up-to-date since there is no need to talk with a web designer each time changes are required
- Customize your website to meet your precise business needs
- Make efficient updates and modifications at any time and from anywhere when using a cloud/web-based CMS
- Use non-technical staff to make updates, although they will need training
- Outsource site maintenance to reduce maintenance costs - in which there is a very competitive supplier market
- Integrate your website with customer relationship management and asset management systems
- Store archived content, either for future use or reference
- Use dynamic marketing such as onsite display, affiliate marketing, promotions or product recommendations, with personalized and targeted content that can have a positive impact on site-conversion rates for enquiries or sales
- Improve search engine optimization and search engine ranking in natural (free) listings, if content is optimized for search
- Create a version of your website that is also optimized for the mobile web, helping to access this growing market

To make the most of these benefits, you will need to define workflows and processes along with your technical requirements. These include deciding who should have access to the CMS, and at what level, as well as establishing the approval procedures.

For Information and Education Purposes:

Come back to this review section once your site launches or you finish your planning to ensure your website has the look and feel you want when presented to your digital audience.

Key Elements of an Effective Website and where we Focus our Attention:

1. Appearance - 2. Functionality - 3. Website Usability - 4. Search Engine Optimization Structure

The most effective website will reflect best practices across all of these elements and our brand audit performed above, along with our wire framing and planning for your site (coming below) will maximize engagement and education of your customers.

Appearance Guidelines:

Good Use of Color: An appropriate color scheme will contain 2 or 3 primary colors that blend well and create a proper mood or tone for your business. Don't overdo the color, since it can compete with the written content.

Text That is Easily Read: The easiest to read combination is black text on a white background, but many other color combinations are acceptable if the contrast is within an appropriate range. Use fonts that are easy to read and are found on most of today's computer systems. Keep font size to 10-13 points for paragraph text.

Meaningful Graphics: Graphics are important, as they lend visual variety and appeal to an otherwise boring page of text. However, don't over-use them, and make sure that add meaning or context to your written content. Don't overload any one page with more than 3 or 4 images.

Quality Photography: A simple way to increase visual appeal is to use high-quality photography. High-quality product images are especially important for online retailers.

Simplicity: Keep it simple and allow for adequate white space. Uncluttered layouts allow viewers to focus on your message. Don't overload your site with overly complex design, animation, or other effects just to impress your viewers.

Functionality

Every component of your site should work quickly and correctly. Broken or poorly constructed components will leave your visitors frustrated and disillusioned with your company.

Error-free copy: Remember the exposure your website will get. Double-check your facts and figures, since you don't know who may be quoting you tomorrow. Nor do you want to be remembered for typos, incorrect grammar, punctuation, or misspellings. Spelling mistakes and bad grammar are unforgivable on a website as well as company materials.

Usability

A critical, but often overlooked component of a successful website is its degree of usability. Your site must be easy to read, navigate, and understand. Some key usability elements include:

Simplicity: The best way to keep visitors glued to your site is through valuable content, good organization and attractive design. Keep your site simple and well-organized.

Fast-loading Pages: A page should load in 20 seconds or less via dial-up; if it's more than that, you'll lose more than half of your potential visitors.

Minimal Scroll: This is particularly important on the first page. Create links from the main page to read more about a particular topic. Even the Search Engines will reward you for this behavior.

Consistent Layout: Site layout is extremely important for usability. Use a consistent layout and repeat certain elements throughout the site.

Prominent, Logical Navigation: Place your menu items at the top of your site, or above the fold on either side. Limit your menu items to 10 or fewer. Remember, your visitors are in a hurry -- don't make them hunt for information.

Descriptive Link Text: Usability testing shows that long link text makes it much easier for visitors to find their way around a site. Long, descriptive link text is favored by search engines, too. Back links are important to give users a sense of direction and to keep them from feeling lost. Use a site map, and breadcrumbs, if necessary.

Cross-Platform/Browser Compatibility: Different browsers often have different rules for displaying content. At a minimum, you should test your site in the latest versions of Internet Explorer (currently, version 11), as well as Firefox and Safari.

Screen Resolution: Screen resolution for the typical computer monitor continues to increase. Today, the average web surfer uses a resolution of 1024x768 pixels. However, you need to make sure that what looks good at that setting will also work well with other resolutions.

Landing Pages

What's the difference between a landing page and a web page? Do you know when you should use a landing page instead of a web page? We'll explore the differences between Landing Pages and Web Pages and when to use each one.

Landing pages are a form of a web page. They usually are intended for a very specific purpose such as an email opt-in, to gather information or to sell a product. Standard web pages are part of a larger website. As such, they have common design and navigation items, meaning more things to see and more ways to go to other places on the site.

Landing pages, however, are a different tool than web pages of a site. They are not for general use, and do not look like the other web pages, though it is entirely possible they are on the same domain.

Landing pages are built to drive traffic for a specific goal. The intent is to focus the visitor solely on the intent of that specific and targeted page, such as the sign-up process. No distractions. No other options. Simply to inform and get each user to act on the call-to-action.

Your landing pages are an extension of your parent website – as the main source of business development (lead generation) these are key to your sales team. Lead generation (business development) refers to earning or collecting a user's data and contact information –in exchange for a product, service, or information.

A "proper" lead should contain a minimum of one method of direct contact. How detailed this contact information is, is a huge factor in the value of the lead and depends a lot upon the method of enticing the user into providing. The challenge is to use an effective marketing strategy to drive traffic to the offers.

Information collected could include: Name – Email Address – Phone Number – Comments etc.

There needs to be some sort of incentive for a prospect to leave their information; this is the core strategy behind this business model. These offers take on many forms – we've attempted to cover most of the recognized ones below. Just as you would leave a business card in real life, an opt-in form attempts to do capture your business information online.

Which products, services or messages in your business should be on a landing page?

Product / Service or Message:

Where it exists currently:

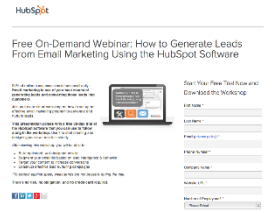


PHOTO & VIDEO

Did you know that 90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual? Visuals are processed 60,000X faster in the brain than text.

This means any information you want to communicate is better communicated in the form of an image. With a capture speed requirement of 3 - 5 seconds, images make a massive difference assisting your visitor to recognize what is put in front of them. It also means you will be able to communicate more value faster by implementing images and videos into your content mix.

Videos on landing pages increase average page conversion rates by 86%. It's also worth noting that research has found similar conversion rate increases from simple images.

Social engagement is rapidly becoming more important for your business' SEO, it places higher in search results, faster, than any other source of content. Images on social media get more engagement than links or text in your website. Images on your website have a far higher chance of being shared than anything else on your page. Visual content is just smart business.

As a matter of fact, businesses who market with infographics increase traffic an average of 12% more than those who don't. Infographics are a visually appealing way to communicate a process or system (how it's done) quickly and easily. Businesses with a graphic designer working in their marketing department can create a short infographic quickly and easily.

Infographics are not only awesome for brand awareness and social-media sharing, they're also referenced more frequently than any other piece of content on the internet today - increasing their reach exponentially. Infographics are growing quickly as a go-to visual as well and look like fun!

If you are blogging and using social media, then you need to realize that posts with visuals receive 94% more page visits and engagement than those without. People are more attracted to images than links or text. Facebook posts with an image receive, on average, more than twice as many comments as those without, and photo albums on Facebook receive 180% more engagement than a normal post.

Research also shows that 60% of consumers are far more likely to click on a business post, search result or advertisement whose images appear in their search results. This means you need to find a way to show your products and services with images.

67% of consumers consider clear, detailed images to carry more weight than product information or customer ratings. Are you surprised by that statistic? It's not the only one... in a study from 2003, a

Harvard student worked with a South African bank, sending 50,000 letters offering short-term loans. They varied the interest rate as well as included psychologically-influential cues. It turned out that having a wholesome, happy female picture in a corner of the letter had as much positive impact on the response rate as dropping the interest rate by four percentage points.

Simply put, visuals show your products without telling people about them. This allows searchers to make decisions without feeling pressure from your business. One of the chief complaints by online users is the constant badgering they receive from brands. Advertisements dog their mobile apps, social networks, searches, etc. Any way you can promote your business without spamming your audience should be pursued and invested in.

Infographics, Slideshares, Facebook posts - these are the pieces of content that will be establishing your business as a trusted resource in your field in 2016 and beyond.

What categories or sections of your business have or require images?

Categories requiring images:

What categories or sections of your business have or require video?

Categories requiring video:

What categories or sections of your business have or require a map – infographic either to comprehend a product/service or process?

Categories that would add customer value with an infographic:

2 DECISIVENESS | Your Decisions establish your strategy; your strategy determines your sales effectiveness.

This is the Strategy Phase, where details are stretched into a roadmap for results. At this stage we are exploring methods and tactics to execute your company mission through your brand so we can begin pulling in the audience.

There are two distinct methods to create sales which is ultimately the goal *and* purpose of your strategy, the **Push** and the **Pull**. With the access to data that digital marketing allows today, we strongly

recommend the pull method. Not only are you guaranteed results, it's easier on both your potential customers and your budget.

The American Advertising Agency and Training Board states it like this:

PUSH METHOD The aim of the push method is to convince retailers, salespersons, or dealers to carry and promote the advertiser's product. This relationship is achieved by offering inducements, such as providing advertising kits to help the retailer sell the product, offering incentives to carry stock, and developing trade promotions.

PULL METHOD The aim of the pull method is to convince the target consumer to try, purchase, and ultimately repurchase the product. This process is achieved by directly appealing to the target consumer with coupons, in-store displays, and sweepstakes.

The digital reference for business does an excellent job of detailing the purpose, value and requirement for strategy in your advertising and marketing, here is a link to review that article in more detail.

<http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/small/A-Bo/Advertising-Strategy.html>

Cyber Alert states that based on their research in conjunction with Forrester, one of the world's leading experts on research, that social and content marketing is a key area of success and failure.

CONTENT CURATION STRATEGY

Content curation means finding, reviewing and sharing content from 3rd Party sources — sources other than your own original content. Through the process of curation, you provide a service to your audience by helping them find content of interest to them. In practice, it means finding and sharing blog posts, news articles, research publications, YouTube videos, and other content that your followers find interesting.

There are a few fundamentals that aren't optional if you market a business online, and none more fundamental than consistently providing content to your audience through your blog and social networks. Those platforms need to be fed with a steady stream of content and content curation is a great way to establish consistent content in these places.

The two primary goals of a content curation strategy are to generate traffic and build brand awareness. These two things serve as the foundation of your online marketing success. Most people focus exclusively on getting traffic and don't understand branding as a goal. Sharing good quality content on a consistent basis does a lot to increase brand awareness. After you implement a consistent content curation process, you will start to hear "I see you everywhere" from your customers, competition, partners and suppliers. (This applies to remarketing as well; we will cover that later on!)

There is a lot of strategic value in developing a good process for leveraging other people's content. Perhaps most importantly, it saves a lot of time. You always need to create your own original content, though through curation, you can also leverage the content other people are creating and save a lot of time in the process.

Strategic Goals of Content Curation:

- Generate traffic (direct and search)
- Build brand awareness and authority
- Grow your social network audiences
- Improve social network presence, attention, and interaction
- Maximize return on time and resources invested in content marketing
- Use Hashtags to Reach and Expand Your Audience
- Consistently-Good Content Is Rewarded with Attention and Clicks

When you share good content on a consistent basis, you are training your followers to click on your links and get rewarded with content they value and want to share.

Building a responsive audience is critical to the success of the promotional campaigns you run on your social networks now and in the future.

SOCIAL AND CONTENT MARKETING

SOCIAL CHANNEL SELECTION

Social Media is a direct conversation and requires input and output attention. Automation can manage some of this exchange, though part of your strategy is to ensure it's the right system for your best channels. It's also important to maintain the human voice in all interactions.

Businesses often charge ahead without a defined objectives or a clear strategy. They may pick a social media platform and dive in without forethought. Remaining active on multiple networks their customers don't visit or posting material that doesn't interest their audience creates no concrete marketing benefits. Social media without a strategy invites social media tragedy.

Strategy mistakes often result at the start of a campaign when marketing managers ask what social media platforms and technologies to use. A better starting point is to ask who you're trying to reach, what you want to accomplish, and what set of social tactics best fits your goal, advises Forrester Research analyst, Nate Elliott. Think about platforms and technology tools only after answering those questions.

It is essential that you select the best social media sites for your content marketing efforts and to make the most of the social media time you have.

Instead of blindly following the in-crowd to the social site du jour, start with the approach: "Where's the hangout filled with folks that share my interests?" As our social lives mature, we realize that the definition of the desirable social set is not the same for everyone, so to narrow the social media playing field, you'll need to decide where they are most likely to congregate.

Who Is Using Facebook: *71% of adult internet users/58% of entire adult population:*

Facebook users: Fully 71% of online American adults use Facebook, a proportion unchanged from August 2013. Usage among seniors continues to increase. Some 56% of internet users ages 65 and older now use Facebook, up from 45% who did so in late 2013 and 35% who did so in late 2012. Women are also particularly likely to use Facebook compared with men, a trend that continues from prior years.



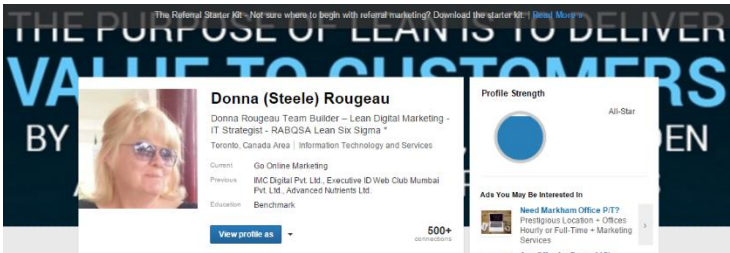
Based on the information above which points (if any), verify this as a valuable social channel for you?

3 key user points:

3 key business points:

Who Is Using LinkedIn: 28% of adult internet users/23% of entire adult population!

Some 28% of online adults are LinkedIn users, up from 22% in August 2013. The site continues to be particularly popular among college graduates, those in higher-income households and the employed (although the increase in usage by those who are not employed to 21% from 12% in 2013 is notable). College graduates continue to dominate use of the site. Fully 50% use LinkedIn, a 12-point increase since last year. It is the only platform where those ages 30-64 are more likely to be users than those ages 18-29.



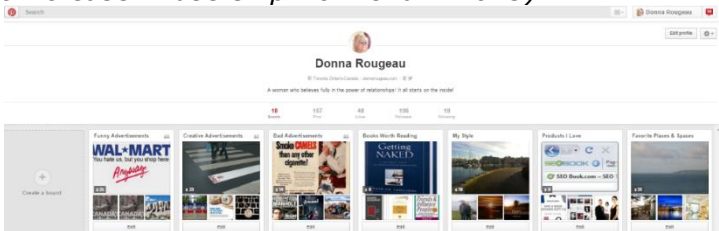
Based on the information above which points (if any) verify this is a valuable social channel for you?

3 key user points:

3 key business points:

Who Is Using Pinterest: 28% of adult internet users/22% of entire adult population!

Some 28% of online adults use Pinterest, up from the 21% who did so in August 2013. Women continue to dominate the site, as they did in 2013: fully 42% of online women are Pinterest users, compared with just 13% of men (although men did see a significant increase in usership from 8% in 2013). While Pinterest remains popular among younger users, there was an 11-point increase between 2013 and 2014 in the proportion of those 50 and older who use the site. Other demographic groups that saw a notable increase in usership include whites, those living in the lowest- and highest-income households, those with at least some college experience, and suburban and rural residents.



Based on the information above which points (if any) verify this as a valuable social channel for you?

3 key user points:

3 key business points:

Twitter - Why you should be on Twitter?

Who Is Using Twitter: 23% of adult internet users/19% of entire adult population

Some 23% of online adults currently use Twitter, a statistically significant increase compared with the 18% who did so in August 2013. Twitter is particularly popular among those under 50 and the college-educated. Compared with late 2013, the service has seen significant increases among a number of demographic groups: men, whites, those ages 65 and older, those who live in households with an annual household income of \$50,000 or more, college graduates, and urbanites.



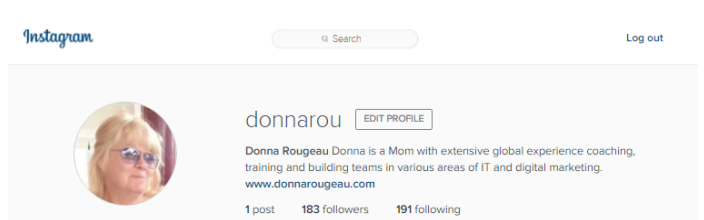
Based on the information above which points (if any) verify this as a valuable social channel for you?

3 key user points:

3 key business points:

Who Is Using Instagram, 26% of adult internet users/21% of entire population!

Some 26% of online adults use Instagram, up from 17% in late 2013. Almost every demographic group saw a significant increase in the proportion of users. Most notably, 53% of young adults ages 18-29 now use the service, compared with 37% who did so in 2013. Besides young adults, women are particularly likely to be on Instagram, along with Hispanics and African-Americans, and those who live in urban or suburban environments.



- Of those who have a profile, 61% have used it in the past 24 hours, an adoption level only surpassed by Facebook (at 84%). By comparison, Twitter stands at 55%, Google Plus 44% and Pinterest 52%. So those currently using Instagram are pretty voracious users by comparison.
- Of ALL those social media users surveyed, 48% declared they are using Instagram more often. This blows the other major platforms out of the water. Facebook was the next-closest platform in terms of expressed growth.
- Of those who have an Instagram profile, 83% use it at work, again surpassing even Facebook and YouTube by a long shot. One reason could be that sharing on Instagram requires no typing. You just snap a photo and post in seconds. One of my friends ran a series on Instagram where he snapped pictures – and rated – the crazy coffee cups in his office kitchen. Hilarious! Inspiration is everywhere, including work.

Based on the information above which points (if any) verify this as a valuable social channel for you?

3 key user points:

3 key business points:

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Now you are ready to get past your social media anxiety and choose the platform (or platforms) that are right for you. That means finding your customers where they are with the right kinds of research and content--be it original or collected from news, entertainment, sports or other trusted sources. It also means being realistic about what you are willing and able to do in terms of interaction. Social media is a two-way channel and you need to participate in conversations that make sense for your customers and your business goals.

EDITORIAL CALENDARS

"Content is King." You've probably heard this phrase a thousand times but the magic behind creating great content starts with an editorial calendar. An editorial calendar provides you a framework to build a successful content business.

A content product, like any content generation product, needs an editorial calendar. Without it, your content is gut-driven. Everything is in order when there is abundance of news, but imagine days when there is a shortage of news and you face writer's block. You can't leave your contributors to create content at will. If you've had this experience, it's time to create an editorial calendar. An editorial calendar will keep you on the right track and will provide direction to your contributors.

In simplest terms, an editorial calendar is an overview of the publishing schedule for the forthcoming week, month, or even a year created in advance. Editorial calendars should be fluid and updated regularly.

The editorial calendar is the heart & soul of any successful publishing process. Without it, content publishing is more like a 'hit-and-miss' affair. Producing random content neglects what your readers want to read and what has been driving you traffic, it also means publishing without a set goal.

No matter the size of your publishing team, an editorial calendar will help you maximize your content pipeline, drive better engagement with your audience and serve as a road map for the months ahead.

Here are few reasons why you should consider creating an editorial calendar:

1. Roadmap for Your Content Production

If you fail to plan than you plan to fail, goes the old saying. As an publisher or a managing editor its critical to create a roadmap for your content product. It could be a quarterly to a weekly roadmap, depending on your immediate and long term goals.

An editorial calendar should include:

- Major categories or segment to cover on a weekly or monthly basic
- Major events and dates you plan to include in your coverage
- Sponsored content in collaboration with brands and advertisers
- Theme based coverage

An editorial calendar helps build momentum from day one. So whether you have just started your publishing or have been doing it for some time, this is one of the important tools of the publishing trade.

2. Quality Content

Your Editorial Calendar adds x-ray vision to your content strategy. You can plan content with guest writers, subject matter experts, industry leaders for exclusive features and interviews in advance through an editorial calendar.

3. Consistent Flow of Content

As a publisher you need a consistent flow of content. A typical day in a content production space starts with hunting for interesting news to cover, but then there are days when there are not enough ideas. You sit at your workstation and realize you don't have anything planned for the day or next few days – anxiety sets in and you have no idea how are you going to run your content production space. An editorial calendar solves this problem.

4. Maintain the Tone of Your Site

Your publication should have its own voice to cut through the noise. The most important responsibility you have is setting a tone for the publication and giving an editorial direction to your team. An editorial calendar is the right tool to carry the editorial vision forward and get everybody on the same page. You can choose the most important categories for your site and ensure a few articles in each of those categories to maintain the flavor of your site.

5. Delegation of Tasks

One of the biggest issues when working with a large team of writers is time pressure and setting deliverables. With an editorial calendar, you can outline the content topics to be created and assign the team responsible for creating that content well beforehand.

You can plan content creation around the important events in your niche so less things slip through the cracks. A smartly designed editorial calendar not only helps you plan ahead.

6. Content Diversification

Your editorial calendar should reflect content divided in various categories, content templates and content types. Group your content ideas properly in these categories and templates, and track of how much content you are producing in each area.

7. Easy Collaboration

Transparency is equivalent to the health of a content product. An editorial calendar will get your whole team on board. It will keep you focused and boost collaboration.

8. Theme-Based Coverage

Just like a holiday planner helps you in planning all your engagements well in advance, you can create a plan of action to work up content based on themes and important events in your industry. For example, you could create a themed series on Halloween, Christmas, New Year, or event-based content on iPhone launch or an Earth Day series.

9. Sponsored Content

Native advertising is gaining grounds with digital publishers. From the likes of Mashable, BuzzFeed, Forbes – publishers are producing interesting and relevant content for their audience in conjunction with the advertisers.

Creating a publishing schedule will help you reach out to the advertisers and collaborate on future campaigns and promotions that resonate with the tone of your site.

Social media is not a standalone skillset, nor is it even a vocation in its own right. It's a mindset, a set of specific tools and most importantly, it's a process woven into content, SEO, and social media marketing. Social media marketing activities occur across the whole business - this altimeter image clearly shows how wide the scope of social media is.

Beyond that - social media has to be increasingly integrated into an organization, not owned by marketing or PR types. Social media doesn't (or shouldn't) belong to someone or just to one team unless they're the only people who care about the customer. Why? Social media starts with your customer, your fans and brand advocates. And, because of all the above - social media marketing requires a strategy, focus, and direction.

A hundred years ago, most businesses were local brick-and-mortar establishments that relied on door-to-door marketing to engage the public. As technology evolved, motion pictures, radio and television opened up new avenues for business marketing, eventually expanding to include direct mail, telemarketing, print advertising, trade shows and e-mail blasts. While these practices have proven successful over the years, many of today's consumers now view them as intrusive, and have consequently become quite savvy at ignoring traditional marketing attempts.

Enter social media – a Web-based inbound approach to marketing that helps small businesses get found online. The term "social media" refers to various Web sites where people connect, interact and share online. Today, 62% of adults worldwide use some form of social media via computers, smartphones, tablets, game consoles, Internet-enabled TVs, handheld music players and e-readers.

Consider These Statistics:

- One billion people actively use Facebook every month
- 500,000 people use Twitter every month
- Google's +1 button is used 2+ billion times each day
- 5 million photos are uploaded to Instagram every hour
- 3,600 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every hour



While social media began as a way to connect friends and family, it has become the norm for all types of businesses – from mom and pop restaurants to high-tech firms – to have a social media presence. The Burson-Marsteller Fortune 100 Social Statistics Report for 2012 shows that:

- There are more than 10 million social mentions each month of Fortune 100 companies
- 87% of Fortune 100 companies use social media (Twitter is the most popular)
- 75% of Fortune 100 companies are on Facebook
- 50% of Fortune 100 companies have a Google+ account
- 25% of Fortune 100 companies have a Pinterest account
- Each corporate YouTube channel averages 2 million views

You don't have to be a Fortune 100 company to take advantage of social media, but as the statistics demonstrate, today's businesses are actively using social media. Coupled with the sheer number of people who actively participate in online social communities, it becomes difficult for small businesses to defend a stance against joining the social media movement.

As social media continues to change the way people communicate, it has become an increasingly important tool for small businesses. As Hannah Twigg explains, "Social media allows [small businesses] to have direct communication with their customers, with the potential to transform [the business] into a virtual sales team." With so many people engaging in social media, it is difficult to ignore its potential to help businesses reach out to new and existing clients. Twigg affirms, "When it comes to recommendations for products and services, people trust other people they know far more than any sophisticated marketing campaign." The more 'fans' you create, the more 'likes' you motivate and the more 'shares' you inspire. As others in your customers' circles observe what their friends and relatives promote, they will follow suit."

Small businesses can implement social media strategies to reach and engage existing and potential clients, while spreading the word about their products and services. In today's connected world, where customers research purchases online and seek recommendations from friends and family, it is in the best interest of most small business to have a vibrant and interactive social media presence.

Go Online Marketing creates and executes engaged social media strategies that produce relationships that become lifetime customers delivering lifetime customer value.

Multiple Site Usage: The new social media matrix

Today, more than half of internet users (52%) use two or more of the social media sites measured (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn), compared with 42% who did so in 2013.

Facebook remains the most popular platform for those using just one social media site—fully 79% of those who use just one site report using Facebook. As in 2013, a significant majority of Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn users say they also use Facebook, more than any other site. At the low end, 86% of LinkedIn users are also on Facebook. At the high end, 94% of Instagram users use Facebook (Instagram's parent company).

The proportion of Facebook users who also use another platform increased significantly since August 2013 for each platform. That is, there are more Facebook users this year who also use Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn than there was last year. Similarly, there are more LinkedIn users who use Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest than there were in 2013. Finally, there are more Pinterest users on Instagram and LinkedIn than in 2013. These increases likely reflect the overall trend toward multiple-site use described above.

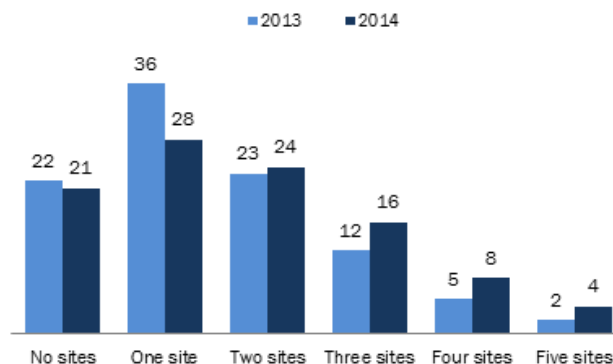
Turning to sites other than Facebook, a significant level of overlap exists between Instagram and Twitter users—58% of Twitter users also use Instagram, and 52% of Instagram users also use Twitter. Among non-Facebook sites, this is the highest rate of “reciprocity” between user groups measured.

How We Create Your Social Media Strategy:

1. First, we find the networks that are right for your business.
2. Learn the type of content that works well on each network for your business.
3. We start with YOUR most important social networks, and add appropriate others over time.
4. Provide the tools you need to improve social media productivity and we automate the process for you but not at the risk of real live engagement.
5. Track your results and make adjustments when necessary.

More people use multiple sites

% of internet users who use the following number of social networking sites (sites measured include: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn), 2013 vs. 2014



Pew Research Center's Internet Project September Combined Omnibus Survey, September 11-14 & September 18-21, 2014. N=1,597.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Social media matrix

% of users of each particular site who use another particular site (e.g., 34% of Pinterest users also use Twitter)

	Use Twitter	Use Instagram	Use Pinterest	Use LinkedIn	Use Facebook
% of Twitter users who ...	-	58%	42%	47%	91%
% of Instagram users who ...	52%	-	47%	38%	94%
% of Pinterest users who ...	34%	43%	-	40%	88%
% of LinkedIn users who ...	39%	35%	40%	-	86%
% of Facebook users who ...	29%	34%	34%	33%	-

Pew Research Center's Internet Project September Combined Omnibus Survey, September 11-14 & September 18-21, 2014.






PEW RESEARCH CENTER

What we recommend:

Try to limit promotional content to just 20% of weekly posts, with the other 80% focused on keeping your audience engaged and informed.










					
	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Pinterest	Google+
Minimum	3 X per week	5 X per week	2 X per week	5 X per day	3 X per week
Maximum	10 X per week	none	5 X per week	10 X per day	10 X per week

At first, we want to focus on your most important network. Once we see how your engagement is going with one network, we can start to incorporate all of your activity into your social media schedule.

					
Name	Facebook	LinkedIn	Twitter	Pinterest	Google+
Primary audience	All	Business	Young adults	Women, foodies, crafters	Men, students, software developers
Good for what?	Sharing text, photos, video, links	Sharing news, product info, testimonials	Sharing news, text updates, links to info	Pinning photos, video, graphics	Sharing text updates, links, photos, video
Best for what?	Sharing engaging content, reaching a large audience	Thought leadership	Sharing original and curated content	Sharing products, how-to/tips, e-books	Increasing your searchability and expertise


Let's look at an example for how the schedule might look like on Facebook:

Now let's see how it might look when we add in Google+ or LinkedIn to the mix:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Monday	 Monday motivation quote	 Link to latest blog post	 Behind-the-scenes photo	 Fill-in-the-blank	 Update on weekend specials
Tuesday	 Behind-the-scenes photo	 Link to latest blog post		 Industry news	 Link to latest blog post

When you add high-frequency networks like Twitter or Pinterest, your schedule might feel a bit crowded. While it still takes time to get things organized, it will make it easier for you to contribute photo's, events or activities into your social media schedule with all the other stuff you have to take care of each day.

Some current statistics advise you to add VISUALS (PHOTO'S / IMAGES) to your social media strategy:

				
Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Pinterest	Google+
Behind-the-scenes photos	Blog posts; interesting articles	Product updates	Product photos	Behind-the-scenes photos
Quotes	Quotes	Blog posts	Guides, eBooks, & white papers	Videos
Fill-in-the-blank	Industry news	Industry news	Videos	Event information
True-or-false questions	Newsletters or announcements	Recruitment videos	Infographics	Blog posts
Blog posts	Vine or YouTube videos	Job postings	Quotes or tips	Industry news
Newsletters or announcements	Event updates	Newsletters or announcements	Blog posts	Guides, eBooks, & white papers
			Curated content	

Currently media or images, are the strongest "PULL" factor for online marketing today and we want to encourage your uptake of this strategy. We will get into that more in the Devise Phase, for now we need to select the channels we will use. The statistics provided below demonstrate that any social strategy your company is currently involved in must be dominated by visuals so we will keep that in mind as we choose visual display capable channels.

- Publishers who use infographics as their marketing weapon can increase their traffic by 12%. Photos are liked twice as much as text updates on Facebook.
- 94% more total views on average are attracted by content containing compelling images than content without images.
- 67% of consumers consider clear, detailed images to be very important and carry even more weight than the product information, full description, and customer ratings.
- 60% of consumers are more likely to consider or contact a business whose images appear in local search results.
- 37% increase in engagement is experienced when Facebook posts include photographs.
- 14% increase in page views are seen when press releases contain a photograph. (They climb to 48% when both photographs and videos are included.)

Content Strategy is key. Digital Donut is a key publisher for content research and testing and one of our reference points when considering strategies for our clients.

Our marketing methods are constantly changing. With the emergence of Social channels such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, many brands and businesses are constantly reshaping their online marketing strategies. This is vital.

This applies to content marketing perhaps more than any other digital marketing method, since changing landscapes often means changing content.

Identify Your Audience

Step one is identifying your audience. Before you can determine what topics you should cover and how to deliver that content, you must think about what content marketing is. It’s about attracting an audience and gaining their trust by publishing information that informs and/or entertains them. Naturally, you won’t be able to inform and entertain your audience if you don’t know who they are and what interests them.

From a B2B perspective, knowing what it is that you’re looking for with your content marketing plan can help you identify the businesses you should be targeting. Developing a clear picture of why you want the attention of that target audience will help you to decide what your content should communicate.

Getting Your Content Out There

The question of content delivery is about much more than a LinkedIn vs. Facebook decision. It’s a question of how you will attract your audience to the compelling content that you’re creating. Identifying the key influencers of your target audience and understanding how to build relationships with those influential people can give you a direct route to that audience.

It is also important to think carefully about sharing your content and whether or not it lends itself to various platforms, screens, and social channels. If you want to see your content snowball, you have to optimize all avenues of engagement so that you can establish leads and ultimately, get people talking. Sometimes this can be as simple as making use of a trending hashtag on Twitter, though in the broader scheme of things, it’s down to a consistent strategy that allows you to build relationships with other businesses and maintain those connections.

There’s much more to content marketing than research, copywriting and tagging. By creating a solid strategy based on the needs of your target audience and what you are looking to gain from them, you’ll be well on your way to success. In addition, incorporating an editorial calendar and an evaluation plan to monitor the effectiveness of your strategy through analysing metrics and reach, this can take your content to the next level. Strategy is step one; creating compelling content is next.

What content are you currently creating or using for digital marketing and how is it curated or distributed?

Content:	Curation Method:	Distribution Channel:

AD CAMPAIGNS

When it comes to Ad Campaigns, Portent says, “Start with strategy then build with imagination.” We couldn’t agree more! For advertising to be “effective,” it must be:

- *Memorable*
- *Resonate with consumers by ringing true and delivering a personally meaningful message, even if the brand has a huge target audience like Nike’s*
- *Communicate how the product or service fits into consumers’ lives or work to make them better, more productive, happier, more fulfilled*
- *Stand for values above and beyond the product or service itself*
- *Be inextricably linked to the brand, so the ad won’t be attributed to a competitor or easily scooped and replicated to get more attention than your original does.*

Winning brands combine weird, powerful, meaningful, inspirational messages delivered in ways that touch their audiences. Great ad campaigns are often founded on deep psychological insights, those that are often discovered through social media listening.

The messages, delivered in novel and thought-provoking ways, increase the odds they’ll be shared virally by brand fans, who further add credibility and awareness. Great campaigns increase loyalty and goodwill, and can encourage purchase across more items within the brand umbrella.

Small Business Chronicles shared some valuable considerations for their readers to assist in differentiating that ad campaign and the strategy for the ad campaign.

When seeking to build their businesses and get customers flocking to their doors, many companies elect to launch an advertising campaign. An advertising campaign is a sizable and comprehensive program that covers all facets of the advertising process, from ad creation to dissemination. Both concepts and strategies make up a complete advertising campaign, but these two advertising components are not interchangeable. Instead, they are distinct; and both serve a specific function within the advertising process as a whole.

Overall Message:

The advertising campaign concept is the overall message of the campaign as a whole. For example, if an advertiser is seeking to sell baby food, he may select a concept that focuses on the fact that the food is all-natural by featuring babies in wildflower fields or sitting amongst vegetables and fruits. After deciding upon the concept, the advertiser is ready to decide how he will put this concept to use and develop his strategies.

Methods:

Advertising strategies are the methods that advertisers use to convince buyers to purchase their products. While related to the concept, they are distinct. Often, advertisers will use time-tested persuasion strategies in their advertising. For example, they may adopt a bandwagon strategy and attempt to show buyers that everyone is buying the advertised product and, as a result, the viewer should too.

Order of Selections:

While there is no one set method for developing an advertising campaign, advertisers tend to select a campaign concept, then allow this concept to inform the rest of the advertisement creation process. By starting with the concept, the advertiser can create a strong foundation upon which to build the rest of his advertising campaign. Also, because the concept is the overarching theme of the campaign as a whole, it often only makes sense to select this element first.

Campaign Changes:

Since campaign strategies and concepts are not necessarily tied to each other, you can change one without changing the other. For instance, if the advertiser decides that his initial concept needs to be revamped, he can adopt a new concept without changing the strategies he is employing. Similarly, if the advertiser decides that his strategies aren't as effective as he hoped they would be, he can select new strategies while still keeping his central concept in place.

What advertising are you currently creating or using for digital marketing and how is it monitored & distributed?

Advertising medium:

Monitoring Method:

Distribution Method:

Ask Yourself:

1. Does your website show up on Page 1 of the popular search engines?
2. Are you aware that it requires legitimate keywords and phrases utilized correctly to do so?
3. If implemented are you showing up page 1 under the keywords & phrases you want to be found under?
4. Can people find your website quickly and easily if they search for it online?

If not, then you are most likely losing sales to your competitors.... and that is something no business owner can afford. This is a section in our proposal where we have gained amazing results for our clients and we want you to benefit from the same.

This is a good time to consider whether display advertising can help you develop a stronger marketing plan.

Digital media has become embedded in the work habits of industrial professionals, and this audience uses a wide variety of digital resources, including search engines, websites, online catalogues and more to conduct research, locate suppliers, and specify products and services. Display ads appear in many of those places, and your ad can give you exposure to a highly targeted and motivated audience that is actively engaged in their buying cycle.

Using digital marketing to convey a message has many strategies, methods and purposes. While advertising on the Google Search network has its own use and benefits, targeting the Google Display Network (GDN) is a whole other story that requires exploring, thought and strategy.

What is the Display network?

As Google explains it:

The Display network consists of millions of website where advertisers can use various ad formats and reach out to the masses.

The **Display Network** is a collection of websites -- including specific Google websites like Google Finance, Gmail, Blogger, and YouTube -- that show AdWords ads. This **network** also includes mobile sites and apps.



According to Think with Google, this network had 90% coverage of all Internet users, and serves 1 trillion impressions per month! Talk about opportunities!

[About the Google Display Network - AdWords Help](https://support.google.com/adwords/answer/2404190?hl=en)
<https://support.google.com/adwords/answer/2404190?hl=en>

Unlike on the Search network, the GDN can show ads that are either:

- Text ads: those are the same ads that advertisers can use on the Search network, with the same character and punctuation restrictions.
- Image ads: a static image, that can vary in sizes and appear on different pages and places on a website.
- Video ads: an ad that embeds a video. Not to be mistaken for YouTube promoted videos.

How Would You Use the Display network?

It might be tempting to create a Display campaign and focus on conversions, just like you would do on the Search network, but the thinking behind display can be slightly different. The GDN is very powerful because it gives the advertisers many options to target and reach the audience they want.

- Contextual or Keyword: it is possible to target websites with a list of keywords related to the products or services. This must be the most common targeting option. Creating a keyword list for the GDN is different from the Search network. The key is to list keywords by theme.
- Affinity: this is based on the users' browser history. As users search the web, cookies are installed on their computer. If some users regularly search and go on a website about a distinctive subject (affinity), then those users would enter a certain affinity. (example: users who read movie critics, and regularly consult movie time etc., would fit into the movie lovers category)
- In-Market: In-Market targeting is slightly different to Interest targeting. This category is based on the users' browser history as well, but also on their social shares and reviews. This is why the In-Market segment is more about users who are further down the buying funnel: they are ready to buy.

- Retargeting: Just as on the Search network, retargeting (or remarketing) can be used on the GDN.
- Placement: Advertisers can choose the websites where they want their ads to appear. Therefore, they have the control of choosing and knowing who is going to see their ads. It is an opportunity to target users who have a specific interest. (example: you sell eco-friendly bamboo products and you target websites related to environment and eco-friendly lifestyle)

Why Should You Use the Display network?

- Branding: this is by far – in my opinion, the main benefit of display advertising. Being present and visible on the web can create trust and knowledge of your brand. Put your brand out there, make your ads scream: “Look at me, my products are great,” and half of the work is done! On a long-term basis, maintain the goal of becoming a top brand using all the marketing activities available to your business.
- Create Demand: by being visible on the GDN, you can create the need or demand for your product. It is not a surprise that today, people are so influenced by what they see (on TV, in the street, social media etc.), and we want what we see. Lucky for you, the GDN offers great exposure and visibility. Of course, your ads have to be top-notch and appealing!
- Specific Targeting: As mentioned above, the multiple targeting options offered by the GDN is a big bonus! Needless to say you can also combine and mix those options to be as targeted as possible. Why does that matter? By using several targeting options, you decrease the audience of your ads BUT the audience is so targeted, that the users are the ones who are the most interested in what you have to sell. Also, you can use the demographics or geographic data to create highly targeted ads. You wouldn't advertise your product to young people the same way would to the elderly, correct?
- Traffic On the Website: it is as easy to click on an ad as the 'Like' button on Facebook. Because the number of impressions of your ads increases a LOT when you do display, the CTR goes down. But not to worry, the GDN can generate a lot of clicks!

What About Conversions, Then?

Brand benefits aside, one common issue reported by businesses using the display network is the struggle for direct response conversions. If you are selling a low price item or promoting a 'no-brainer' offer, then you should convert, providing your targeting is tight.

Where things get more challenging is when your offer is high-value or complex in nature. They are interested but they are not searching for it 'right now' so chances are they need more time to commit to the purchase. If this situation applies to your business, a better strategy would be to use the display network to acquire leads, then follow up on your leads before showing them your main offer.

Now that we understand what is in the design pillar, let's drill down into the information so we can start making these important decisions.

How are you currently monitoring, measuring and valuing conversions from your digital marketing efforts?

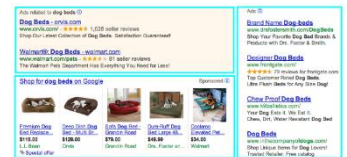
Conversion methods:

Monitor process system?

Now it's time to review the paid advertising options available; there are many and this is not exhaustive, though this will take you through the major players in the realm of PPC (Pay-Per-Click) advertising online:

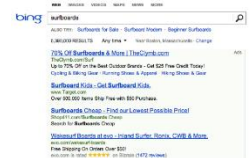
Google Search Ads

Google search ads are online ads that appear alongside the search engine result page when users search a keyword query on Google. These ads are PPC, or pay-per-click ads, in which advertisers pay for each ad click. Google's PPC search ads are managed by Google's AdWords advertising platform, which allows advertisers to bid on keywords, craft ad text, set budgets, and more. To advertise on Google AdWords, you'll need to create a Google AdWords Account.



Bing Ads

Bing ads are similar to Google ads in that they work on a pay-per-click basis. Advertisers can manage their ads through the Bing Ads service, formerly known as Microsoft adCenter. You can get started with creating Bing Ads here once you have a Bing Ads Account.



Facebook Ads

Facebook ads exist in many different forms, each offering unique pros and cons for advertisers. To learn all about Facebook advertising, read our Facebook Marketing blog post, or check out our list of 45 Facebook advertising tips. Marketplace ads appear in the side columns of the Facebook website with a headline, copy, and an image.

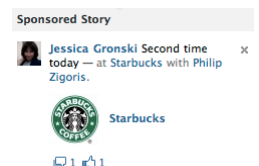


Promoted Posts are Facebook ads that let advertisers pay a flat rate to promote a single post on their Facebook business page. The promoted post reaches more fans and friends of fans than a regular post.



Sponsored Stories

Sponsored Stories show a user's interaction with an advertiser's page or product to the user's friends and larger network. Sponsored Stories are also one form of Facebook ads that can appear in a user's newsfeed.



Twitter Ads

Twitter ads refer to the paid boosts that brands on Twitter can use to extend the reach of their tweets, promote a chosen hashtag, or gain more followers.

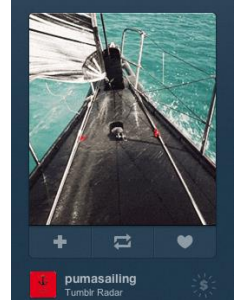
Promoted tweets allow advertisers' tweets to reach more people's home feeds, and offer a healthy batch of targeting options. Twitter ads also



include Promoted Accounts, letting advertisers show up more often in Twitter's who to follow recommendation feature. Promoted Trends gets your custom hashtag in the trends bar, earning additional attention and notice from the Twitter audience. If you're looking to advertise on Twitter, be sure to measure social media ROI.

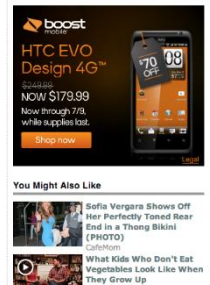
Tumblr Ads

Tumblr ads come in a few different formats – Tumblr Radar and Spotlight allow for "sponsors," a.k.a. advertisers, to be featured in areas where Tumblr highlights unique content and accounts. With 54 million users posting 70 million posts per day that get over half a billion page views each day, the Tumblr community is an active and lively one. Tumblr also offers sponsored Web post ads, which are pieces of Tumblr content crafted by advertisers that appear in users' main dashboard feed, integrated with normal, user-generated content. These Tumblr ads have small dollar signs to mark them as advertising content. In order to post your online ads onto the Tumblr platform, you'll have to become a Tumblr sponsor.



Banner Ads

Banner ads are image-based advertisements that often appear in the side, top, and bottom sections of websites. They can range widely in terms of size, design, and function. You'll typically find them in all sorts of news-based websites, blogs, and specialized web communities. Many websites brokerage their ad space with ad exchanges such as Google's Display Network, or you can buy the ad space in the same manner you'd buy an ad on a newspaper.



Google Display Ads

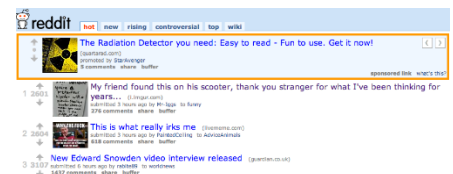


Google Display Ads are a form of contextual banner ads used in the Google Display Network. Google's collection of network sites that agree to host display ads. The Google Display Network also includes Google properties such as YouTube, Gmail, Blogger, etc. Google Display ads can be text, images, and even video. To serve online ads on the Google Display Network, you need to use Google AdWords.

Reddit Ads

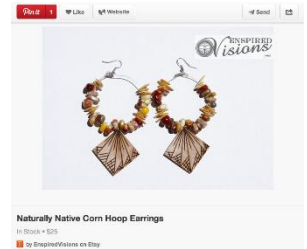
Reddit ads are advertisements featuring a headline title, destination URL, and an optional photo. Reddit ads work on a bid-based system, in which advertisers can set campaign budgets and choose how long they want their campaign to run for. Reddit ads allow for some unique targeting options and are often fairly cheap, with low cost-per-impressions.

What really makes Reddit ads unique are the comments and voting – users can up vote or down vote your ad, giving advertisers an easy read on if users like or dislike an ad. Each ad, like all other posts on Reddit, has a comment section. This can be useful for advertisers because it allows users to provide direct feedback that goes straight to the advertiser.



Pinterest Ads

Pinterest ads are simply pieces of content pinned by brands and advertisers. When marketing a specific product, marketers create Pinterest advertisements by adding a dollar sign before the price amount to the description. This tells Pinterest that this item is for sale at that specific price. Pinterest marketers can then link the pinned item to the official product page to drive retail traffic.



Buyer Profiling

- Improving the quality AND quantity of qualified leads, advanced buyer profiling gives technology marketers the best of both worlds: They increase the quality of the leads they generate while also increasing the total number of leads. That's because advanced profiling allows a marketing organization to scale its profiling and segmentation efforts without sacrificing their ability to focus on "prospects" rather than "suspects."
- Accelerating the sales pipeline. By some estimates, a sales team discards or ignores 70% or more of the leads it receives from marketing. When a marketing organization identifies exactly which leads are likely to buy a specific product or service, within a particular timeframe, it can shorten the sales cycle and give sales reps greater confidence that the leads they receive are worth pursuing.
- Revealing new market opportunities. Advanced profiling allows technology vendors to identify promising market segments that may fall outside their traditional targets. Rather than segmenting by company revenue, for example, a marketing team may segment based on specific aspects of a prospect's installed IT base – a method that can dramatically expand the number of companies worth targeting.
- Enabling cost-effective SMB marketing campaigns. Companies that traditionally market to large enterprises often consider the SMB market – a group that includes millions of companies – a cost-prohibitive target. When marketers have access to detailed intelligence about these companies' IT needs and buying intentions, SMB buyers can be segmented and targeted far more accurate.

Remnant Banner Ads

Web publishers who make money through advertising often generate more page views than they can sell through their own advertising efforts. Smaller sites may rely completely on an ad network such as Google AdSense or AdBrite so they can concentrate solely on publishing and not worry about ad sales. Larger sites may have sales forces selling ad impressions, but generally can't sell enough ads – at least at their desired rates – so they'll backfill whatever they don't sell with ads from a network. These extra ads are called remnant ads. Go ahead and answer the door – it's just opportunity knocking'.

A variety of ad networks allow you to buy these remnant ads on a very inexpensive basis, including Advertising.com, Microsoft adCenter, and Google AdWords through their display network (formerly called their content network). These services can be referred to as content network advertising, display ads, advertising networks, advertising exchanges, or other terms. With these networks – and others – you can buy the ads in a variety of ways, including on a CPM (cost-per-1000 impressions) and CPC (cost-per-click) basis. Buying them on a CPC basis is awesome. With most of the networks, you have the ability to place text, image/banner, video, or interactive ads, although the individual publishers may only offer one or two of these different ad formats, as well as only some of the variety of sizes available. Also, keep in mind, you have the ability to fully geo-target your ad campaigns based on the IP address of the user, just like you can with paid search. Let's say you want to advertise just in the Cleveland DMA. You can have your ads appear on local Cleveland sites like the Cleveland Plains-Dealer and on non-Cleveland specific sites like ESPN or the NY Times or anywhere else where the site is opted into that particular ad network.

Contextual Advertising

Most of these ad platforms allow you two basic forms of advertising (and a hybrid combination): Placements. Like the name suggests, you choose the particular site or page of site where you want your ads to appear. Contextual advertising matches your ads up to particular content regardless of the site. As an example, if you're selling home gym equipment, you can have your ad appear on any page in the network where the content subject is about fitness or nutrition or whatever is a good match. This type of advertising can be very powerful, although you need to be careful to avoid bad matches.

Retargeting

Retargeting, also known as remarketing, is a form of online advertising that can help you keep your brand in front of bounced traffic after they leave your website. For most websites, only 2% of web traffic converts on the first visit. Retargeting is a tool designed to help companies reach the 98% of users who don't convert right away. Retargeting is a powerful branding and conversion optimization tool, though it works best if it's part of a larger digital strategy. Retargeting works best in conjunction with inbound and outbound marketing or demand generation. Strategies involving content marketing, AdWords, and targeted display are great for driving traffic, but they don't help with conversion optimization. Conversely, retargeting can help increase conversions, but it can't drive people to your site. Your best chance of success is using one or more tools to drive traffic and retargeting to get the most out of that traffic.

Digital advertising options are plentiful. Of these, the primary choice for most digital businesses is Google AdWords. We make sure your best options are chosen according to your businesses needs and results.

When many people think of paid advertising or Pay-Per-Click (PPC) marketing they automatically think of Google AdWords, and for good reason. Google AdWords has by far the biggest reach available to all advertisers. However, paid advertising doesn't just stop there.

Google's market share means you'll be targeting a large reach of customers in the fastest time possible, but if you're not careful you'll either end up spending way too much for traffic you don't need or you may not reach the right people as a result of poor targeting. Another issue is having a market niche that is so small there isn't the demand for your product or services even within this vast Google network. Another problem is not being allowed to advertise through Google because your product/service violates their terms of service.

It's very useful to be aware of what other platforms could offer. Here are some options:

Yahoo! Bing Network

As the name suggests, this is an ad network by the two other major search engines. Apart from Yahoo! and Bing, the marketplace features syndicated partner sites such as Facebook, Amazon plus networks like The Wall Street Journal Digital Network. As of February 2013, the Yahoo! Bing Network accounts for 30% of the online search share in the US. The main advantage of Bing Ads compared to Google AdWords is great support service: no automated reply templates, real people providing actionable tips to solve your problems. Bing Ads have lower prices compared to Google AdWords. Traffic is often lower than that in Google AdWords, yet it's of really high quality.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Display Advertising

Display advertising allows you to show banner adverts on webpages across the Internet and on apps. Typically Click-Through-Rates (CTRs) are lower than on search networks, but it's a more visual way to grow your brand visibility and re-target people that have already viewed your website.

What Advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Yahoo Bing Ad Network

Along with the Yahoo Bing search network, there is also a content network that you can target through the Yahoo Bing interface. This allows you to target people on primarily on Yahoo and MSN, and also other partner sites. As with Google AdWords you can choose to target by context, keywords or specific domains. Again, there is less competition and therefore cheaper bids than on the Google display network so it might be a good one to try for little cost.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

BuySellAds

BuySellAds powers the display advertising for over 1,500 high profile websites with over 6 billion ad impressions each month. It's an intuitive platform that you can easily use directly with no other services. You can also utilize fully sponsored content and custom advertising units.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

AdRoll

Although AdRoll is famous for being a retargeting platform that works best for Facebook retargeting, it also has its own network. Use AdRoll if you want to set up some clever retargeting display ads to capture visitors that are more ready to buy.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Zemanta

Zemanta has a wide range of networks, including popular service Outbrain, to distribute your content ads in different formats; promoted content, in-text links, and in stream ads.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

StumbleUpon

StumbleUpon describes itself as a discovery engine that shows random webpages to its users based on the topics they are interested in. Your website could be shown organically if it has been submitted to StumbleUpon, but it’s easier to gain larger amounts of traffic by using their advertising platform.

It allows you to feature your webpage URL more often in the stumble process and target users by age, gender, location, device, and interest.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Reddit

Reddit is sometimes referred to as the Home page of the Internet. It has a very loyal user base of over 170 million that like to share the latest and best website links. For this reason, it’s a good choice to advertise if you have some really great content you want to help raise awareness of or even go viral.

Ads get votes to increase engagement as well as direct clicks. Time scheduling and what section your ad appears on will allow you to best target users. Reddit is best avoided for corporate advert messaging; the key is casual & fun content. Overly commercial messaging just won’t work on Reddit.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Social Advertising

Social advertising is where you are only advertising on a social network. There is no other way to target these users other than through the relevant advertising platform for each. The good news is that social advertising is still underused which means you'll find cheap clicks that can generate a good response.

Facebook Advertising Options

The advantages of using Facebook advertising are of course the massive reach and the ability to target users based on demographics right down to individual users.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Twitter

Twitter allows you to target users in a variety of ways; promoted accounts to gain followers, promoted tweets to gain increased engagement for individual tweets, direct website clicks, and lead collection of emails addresses directly in Twitter feeds.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

LinkedIn

Targeting influential business people is usually only done through LinkedIn as these people are not always on Facebook and Twitter. LinkedIn is an ideal choice if you work in a B2B industry as you can target people by job title or function, industry or sector and by seniority and company size. This means you have a better chance of getting through to the right person at the right company. You can use text, images, and video in your ads to make them stand out.

What advertising is competing directly for your market share here and how?

Competitor Phrase:

Competitor Ad:

AVG CPC and CTR:

Summary

As you can see, there is a huge variety of other paid advertising channels available. Native advertising is one area where there are lots of new opportunities that don't rely on sales adverts. It's important to consider who your audience is and what websites or online services they frequent. This way you can decide what might work best to target your ideal customers.

How to Set a Budget for Your Paid Ads

I scooped this years ago from someone else online:

The single most critical decision in a PPC program is term selection. Only bid on terms that are extremely relevant to your business. This is not a time to be optimistic along the lines of "Well we only provide service in Phoenix, but we'd like to provide service in Indiana someday, so let's just bid on all the Indiana search terms." That will blow through your budget faster than Kobayashi eating hot dogs.

Use programs such as Word Tracker or Google's term selection tool to find search terms that are right for you. As an example, let's assume you want to focus on 100 search terms, with a combined daily search volume of 400 per day. That works out to approximately 12,000 potential searches per month.

Multiple studies – including our own research – have shown that on average one-third of searchers will click on paid ads, with the balance clicking on natural search results. Remember that the paid ads are typically at the top of the page and in the right hand column, often with some sort of blue or gray background color behind them.

Using this data point, we can assume that the universe of potential PPC clicks for your search term is 3,960 per month ($12,000 \times 33\%$). Assuming you are going to launch your campaign on Google and Yahoo (with possible expansion later), you will reach 80% of all searchers, so your official click universe is 3168 per month ($3960 \times 80\%$). But what percentage of those 3168 searchers will click on your ad? Your click rate will depend on how aggressively you bid and how well-written your ads are.

It's not easy to craft a great ad in 80 characters, and very small changes can have a big impact on your results. Recognize that your results are intrinsically linked, to some degree, to the behavior of your competition. You'll often find competitors "bidding blind" in search engine advertising, paying whatever it takes to stay number one in the results. This is like getting pulled over because the guy next to you is speeding, and it can be extremely frustrating to watch them spiral up the per click prices for all bidders.

In general, we use a rate of 9% to project the percentage of paid clicks a solid ad will attract if it typically falls in the top 3 bid positions. This then gives you approximately 285 clicks per month on your ad ($3168 \times 9\%$). Remember, this is 9% of the people that click on paid listings.

Yahoo! provides a seemingly accurate bid price range tool. Use this tool to determine average top bid prices for your search terms. Add 15% to account for Google's higher average click fees. If the average price for top 3 bid positions for your search terms is \$2, use \$2.30 as your average.

Multiply that by your estimated clicks (285) and Shazam! You have your estimated monthly expenditure for PPC: \$655 (285 x \$2.30).

EMAIL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS AND AUTOMATION

This strategy is all about determining the systems and processes that will be used to manage, monitor and execute tasks such as emailing new customers, setting up social media-to-email programs, and emailing your users every time you post blog content.

Let's start by investigating what email marketing and marketing automation actually are. [Quick Sprout](#) is one of my favourite content producers on this topic because they keep it so easy to understand and retain! Have a look below:

Marketing is the lifeblood of every brand-to-customer (or prospect) relationship. The field is also heavily integrated with sales. When companies first launch, they're typically run by builders and sellers. Builders create the product, while sellers are out in the field forging 1:1 connections with potential customers.

The sales process is marketing in its most nascent stages.

As a company starts to grow, it's impossible to maintain 1:1 relationships with everybody. At this point, it's time to hire a marketing director who can build performance-driven, conversion-centric programs at scale.

Eventually, your company's marketing program will get so big that you can't manage everything. You could always hire a team of marketing specialists, but eventually, you're going to start wasting cash on redundant tasks such as emailing new customers, setting up social media-to-email programs, and emailing your users every time you post blog content.

That's where marketing automation comes in. Marketing automation is the use of software to automate marketing processes such as customer segmentation, customer data integration, and campaign management. The use of marketing automation makes processes that would have otherwise been performed manually much more efficient, and makes new processes possible. Marketing automation is an integral component of customer relationship management.

Any company's buy cycle will span multiple touch-points. For instance, a customer may find your company through search. He may decide to 'like' your company's Facebook page and then come back to your site to read a recently shared blog article. Your awesome blog content may convince him to become an email subscriber.

Conversion paths are unique. Imagine trying to chase down hundreds of them – it's impossible. That's where marketing automation comes in.

Fact: Marketing automation connects multiple touch-points and marketing channels including social media, email marketing, and content marketing. One of the core goals of marketing

automation is to nurture prospects for the long-term, which means focusing on goals beyond direct sales.

Myth: Marketing automation is cold, inhuman, and impersonal. “Automation” is just another way of saying that we’re spamming people.

Fact: Marketing automation makes it easier to send personalized, 1:1 targeted messages. In other words, marketing automation makes communication stronger. When you automate your marketing, you can focus more heavily on the quality of your campaigns and messaging. Marketing automation gives your team the ability to add more personal touches to your campaign – by collecting data on a prospect’s interests and goals, you can custom-tailor future offers so that they are more relevant.

In fact, marketing automation will empower your organization to do the following:

- Add dynamic content based on an individual’s specific user profile. For instance, you can send targeted offers based on website patterns.
- Categorize customers and prospects by common behaviour’s, interests, and demographic details. These will be dimensions for segmenting your customers.
- Develop optimal marketing patterns. Marketing automation can help your company test different variables like email send times, subject headings, and ideas for personalization.
- Integrate marketing channels to deliver a comprehensive, cross-platform user experience. Make sure that every touch-point is carefully planned for optimal conversion optimization.

Myth: Marketing automation is spam.

Fact: No way.

Marketing automation is one of the most user-friendly marketing channels available because it’s tailored around personalized user experiences. You’re not blasting audiences with an advertising messages. Imagine instead that you’re nurturing leads and guiding prospects through the sales conversion funnel.

What content are you currently creating or using for Email marketing and how is it curated or distributed?

Content:

Curation Method:

Distribution System:

Email Marketing Campaigns and Automation:

Email Marketing Strategy for 2015/16:

To be sure, finding the key to a stand-out message is critical to your bottom line—whether that bottom line is cold, hard cash, community engagement or anything in between. What follows are eight inbox-tested email marketing strategies that successful senders have used to get their emails clicked.

1. Personalize your email without using the recipient's name

No more "Dear [INSERT NAME HERE]".

The practice of personalized email greetings is not nearly as effective as it may seem. In fact, research by Temple's Fox School of Business suggests that this particular kind of personalization could be harmful. Given the high level of cyber security concerns about phishing, identity theft, and credit card fraud, many consumers would be wary of emails, particularly those with personal greetings.

A significant element of email marketing is relationship. Does a recipient trust you? Does the recipient know who you are? When an email jumps the gun by forcing familiarity too soon, the personalization comes across as skeezy. Intimacy is earned in real life, and it would appear to be the same way with email. Take this example from my inbox; no one has called me lowercase kevan I lee in years.

Faking familiarity with the subscriber turns many wary email readers off. But this isn't to say that all forms of personalization are off-limits. In fact, a particular brand of personalization can pay off big time: Sending email that acknowledges a subscriber's individuality (e.g., purchase history or demographic).

(The study) also found that product personalization, in which customers are directed to products that their past purchasing patterns suggest they will like, triggered positive responses in 98 percent of customers.

The takeaway here is that if you are to use personalization as an email strategy, do so in a meaningful way. It takes little knowledge or relationship to place someone's name in your greeting. It shows far greater care to send personalized email that is specific to a recipient's needs and history. Again, an example from my inbox, this email from Rdio dispenses with the formalities and simply provides an update on music I actually listen to.

2. The Long and Short of Subject Lines

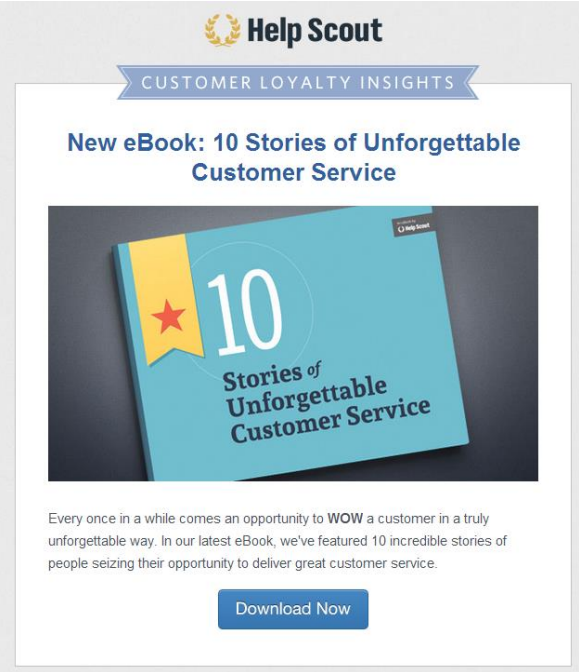
When it comes to deciding how to craft that perfect subject line, there appears to be really only one area to avoid: the subject line of 60 to 70 characters. Marketers refer to this as the "dead zone" of subject length. According to research by Adestra, which tracked over 900 million emails for its report, there is no increase in either open rate or clickthroughs at this 60-to-70-character length of subject line.

Conversely, subject lines 70 characters and up tested to be most beneficial to engage readers in clicking through to the content, and subject lines 49 characters and below tested well with open rate.

In fact, Adestra found that subject lines fewer than 10 characters long had an open rate of 58%. Short subjects came in vogue with the success of President Barack Obama’s email fundraising. He saw incredible engagement with subjects like “Hey” and “Wow.”

So the question becomes: Do you want to boost clicks (response) or opens (awareness)? Go long for clickthroughs; keep it short for opens.

Either way, a helpful email strategy is to squeeze out more words or cut back just a bit to avoid that 60 to



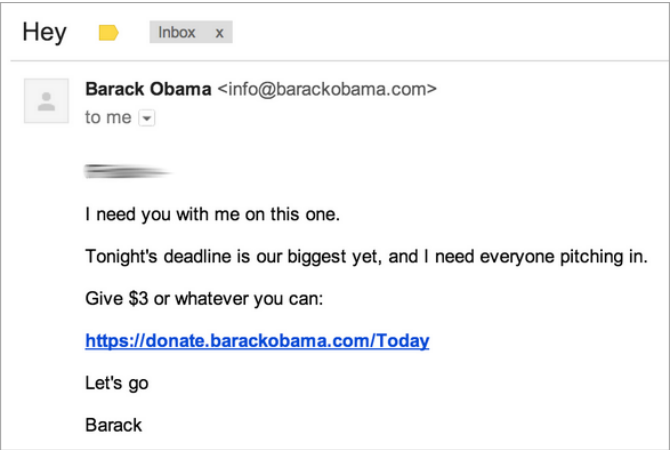
Optimal mailing time often depends upon your customers’ behaviors, inbox crowding, and the deployment times of other marketers.

Inbox crowding and the deployment times of other marketers go hand-in-hand. If your email goes out when few others do, it stands a greater chance of getting noticed (so quick, start sending between 8:00 and midnight before everyone else catches on).

Optimal mailing for your customers’ needs will be up to you. Test, test, and test some more to find out how your customer ticks and when he/she opens email.

4. The Best Content is Free Content: Give Something Away

In a study on their email list of 6,300 subscribers, Bluewire Media tested various types of content to see what led to the highest rates for opens and clicks. The winner was templates and tools, just the kind of freebies that email readers want.

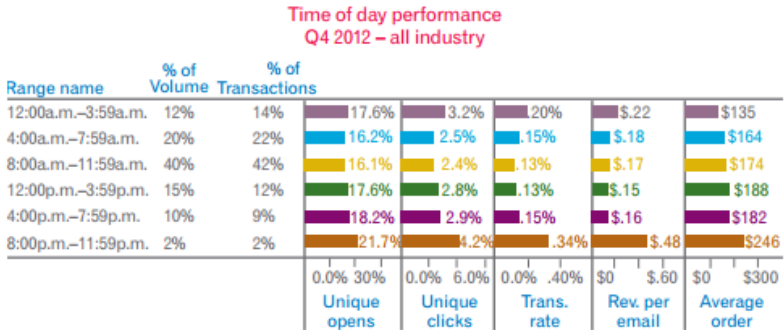


8:00 p.m. to Midnight is the Prime Time to Send Your Email

While many messages may be built during business hours, the ones with the best open rates are being sent at night.

In their quarterly email report for 2012’s fourth quarter, Experian Marketing Services found that the time of day that received the best open rate was 8:00 p.m. to midnight. This block not only performed better for open rate (a respectable 22 percent) but also for clickthroughs and sales.

The chart below on the right here that the 8:00 to midnight window is also the least used—a key factor in helping those late night emails outperform the rest. From Experian:



Source: Experian Marketing Services

Here is a freebie example from Help Scout:

Many a consumer will ask, "What's in it for me?" When it comes to resources, Bluewire Media's test results say that templates and tools outweigh ebooks, expert interviews, brain teasers, and even photo albums. You will want to test with your own list, but certainly use Bluewire's research as a head start.

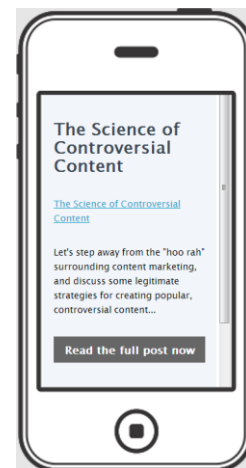
5. Mobile Opens Accounts for 47% Of All Email Opens

Mobile opens accounted for 47% of all email opens in June, according to numbers provided by email marketing firm Litmus. If your email list accounts for \$100,000 in sales each month, could you afford to wave goodbye to \$44,000 just because your email looks funky on a mobile phone?

Design responsively to ensure that your email looks great no matter where it's read.

Here are some quick mobile design tips:

- Convert your email to a one column template for an easy mobile fix.
- Bump up the font size for improved readability on smart phones.
- Follow the iOS guideline of buttons at least 44 pixels wide by 44 pixels tall.
- Make the call-to-action obvious and easy to tap. Above the fold is preferable.
- Consider ergonomics. Many users tap and scroll with their thumb, so keep important tappable elements in the middle of the screen.



6. Email Still Reigns Over Facebook and Twitter

Social media may be the young whippersnapper nipping at email's heels, but the content king of the inbox still holds sway in social influence, according to a study by SocialTwist. Over an 18-month period, SocialTwist monitored 119 referral campaigns from leading brands and companies. The results showed a significant advantage to email's ability to convert new customers compared to Facebook and Twitter.

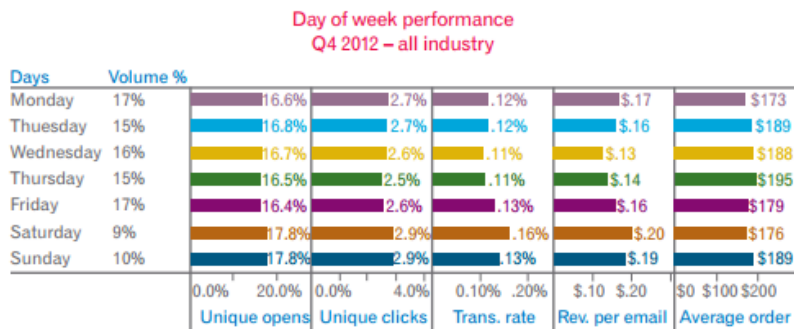
Of the 300,000 referrals who became new customers, 50.8 percent were reached by email, compared to 26.8 percent for Twitter and 22 percent for Facebook.

Email ruled supreme, by almost double.

7. Send Email On the Weekends

While not as overwhelming a winner as the 8:00 p.m. to midnight time of day, Saturday and Sunday did outperform their weekday counterparts in Experian's study of day-of-week performance.

Again, the volume of email sent on the weekends is low, just like the volume for evening emails, which could help those messages stand out more. The margins for clickthrough, open, and sales rates were not substantial, but in email marketing, every little bit counts.



Source: Experian Marketing Services

8. Re-engage an Inactive Group of Subscribers

Your list is huge. Great! The only problem is that two-thirds of it may be inactive.

Research has found that the average inactivity for a list is 63%, meaning that once someone joins they are less likely to ever follow-up with your follow-up emails. Email marketing firm Listrak goes so far as to identify the first 90 days as the window for turning a sign-up into a devotee (and they lay out a plan for doing so).

What’s to become of that inactive 63%? Re-engagement campaigns are an excellent place to start.

Recently, a re-engagement campaign from Digg wound up in my inbox. The subject was catchy (“This Is Not An Email From 2006”), and the content helpfully explained what the email was all about.

As with everything that we call science, it’s all about doing experiments.

ENGAGEMENT

Customer engagement is about encouraging your customers to interact and share in the experiences you create for them as a business and a brand. When executed well, a strong customer engagement strategy will foster brand growth and loyalty.

What is Customer Engagement?

Customer engagement is about encouraging your customers to interact and share in the experiences you create for them as a business and a brand. When executed well, a strong customer engagement strategy will foster brand growth and loyalty.

Businesses that focus on customer engagement are focused on value creation, not revenue extraction. These are businesses that know how to engage their customers by providing them with real value whether it be through an exceptional end-to-end customer experience, great content or strong customer support that are about delivering more than the traditional sell.

How do you engage with your customers?

Engagement channel:	Engagement Method:	Listening /Monitoring process:

Humanize Your Brand

At the heart of everything, it’s important to understand that every customer wants to feel you understand their needs and that they can relate to your brand. For example, find a personality within in your

organization who is passionate about your brand and a natural communicator, you can grow them into a thought leader and give them a voice to humanize your brand and engage your audience.

Create opportunities exist to build their presence and promote your brand – they can regularly blog on your own site and guest blog on others, be used in video content, engage in speaking opportunities, present webinars and publish white papers and e-books – all ways to establish your brand’s voice with a trusted face.

Think about your business model and how you can best serve your customers. When do your customers need you? What hours do you need to be available to them?

Seamless, the online food ordering service and one of my favourite companies (not least because I love to eat at all hours!), services customers in different time zones across the US. Not only are they fantastic at providing customer service around the clock but they’re stellar at timely, relevant offers like snow day discounts and engaging you with fun food facts across their twitter and email channels.

The customer experience you provide is key because it gives marketers and business owners a way to increase satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy. A study by White House Office of Consumer Affairs found that 80% of U.S. consumers would pay more for a product or service to ensure a superior customer experience. Isn’t that telling?

It’s about looking at all of your customers and delivering them exceptional service no matter if they are worth \$1 or \$1M to your business. Remember, in the long run, your customers will determine your revenue.

What systems are you using to manage your online customer experience?

System:	Monitoring Method:	Reporting/results – customer:

Photo & Video Strategies nearly dominate the mobile and social media channels! At the risk of sounding like a broken record, it’s amazing how fast things can change in 12 short months and 2014/15 have been no exception.

While reviewing the research 2 major trends emerged and both highlight the effectiveness of visual content marketing. As you will learn, this year’s data reveals that marketers who are leveraging visual content are seeing significant increases in their blog traffic, social media engagement, visitor-to-lead conversion rates and inbound customer acquisition results.

Let's begin by examining a few statistics that demonstrate the impact visual content has on social media reach and engagement.

Over the last 12 months almost every major social network, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram have increased the prominence and importance of visual content. Keeping pace with this trend, several research studies conducted over the course of 2014/15 point to the rather amazing effectiveness of visual content for social media.

Here are a few stats, specifically related to social media, which you should consider while you are crafting your 2015 content marketing strategy:

- Last year, the amount of video from people and brands in Facebook's News feed increased 3.6X year-over-year.
- Tweets with images receive 18% more clicks, 89% more favorites and 150% more retweets
- Socialbakers.com looked at the top 10% of posts made by more than 30,000 Facebook brand pages and found that posts with photos saw the most engagement—accounting for a whopping 87% of total interactions.
- The top 3 content formats that B2B buyers seek out to research a purchase decision include: Whitepapers (78%), Case Studies (73%), and Webinars (67%).
- 95% of B2B buyers agreed that they preferred shorter content formats.

It has become clear over the past few years that Inbound Marketing is the way of the future for any company who wants to succeed in the online space. But as more and more information competes for people's attention on smaller and smaller screens, it's becoming increasingly clear that Visual Content is what will truly engage audiences and lead to more traffic and higher conversion rates.

Let's look at some more of these relevant statistics about the importance of visual content:

- The human brain processes visual information 60,000 faster than text.
- 93% of human communication is visual.
- Tweets with images receive 18% more clicks, 89% more favorites, and 150% more retweets than plain text tweets
- Compelling visual elements result in a 37% increase in engagement from targeted customers.

The opportunity this provides for business is massive. But there are some key concepts and strategies that you need to know in order to leverage the power of this shift towards using visual content in social media.

What began with websites, became dynamic websites or “blogs”. The humble Blog attracted interaction, comments and community-building around posts or articles of 500-1000+ words in length. Then posts became shorter and we embraced Facebook, and then shorter again as 140 word “tweets” sprouted on Twitter and introduced a new way of communicating. We had moved from Blogs and Blogging to Micro-blogs.

We also made the shift from Tell to Show. Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs became more visual. Images were showcased everywhere. Microblogs evolved into multi-media microblogs with sites such as YouTube and Tumblr offering the rapid, visual transfer of information in entertaining formats. These platforms allowed us to devour visual material quickly.

It was inevitable that we would reach a point where image-based social networks such as Pinterest and Instagram have grown at exponential rates. These platforms are breaking all records. Platforms where no words are necessary. Where a picture really does say a 1,000 words.

What Does This Shift Mean for Your Business or Brand?

In short, it means that businesses or brands online need to take note of the stats. In 2012 alone we have seen You Tube pass 4 Billion Daily Video Views and Pinterest become the 4th largest driver of traffic worldwide. UPDATE: In fact, Pinterest, has just recently become the 2nd largest driver of traffic worldwide. You can read more about the latest stats [here](#) and [here](#).

With Pinterest becoming one of the fastest growing networks, Instagram has matched this with massive growth and high rates of engagement. Instagram was recently reported by Dane Atkinson (CEO of SumAll.com as having as much as 10 times greater engagement than other platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Not bad for a little photo sharing site. Is it any wonder that Facebook snapped it up for \$1 Billion?

3 DEVELOPMENT | Production is where it all comes together, be patient!

Site Development

When it comes to your site development, it's time to stop settling for shallow answers and start analyzing the facts. What we understand at Go Online Marketing is that solid Web design matters – but why? And what sort of impact does it have on the other aspects of your business?

Are you under the impression that web design should be an isolated part of your marketing efforts? This is a myth that many companies believe, and it could be setting your business back in more ways than one. Web design, while certainly important from an aesthetic point of view, encompasses much more. From SEO and traffic to branding and conversion rates, your site's web design affects your entire internet presence.

An excellent study by Joseph Putman was shared in Forbes and its stated as well as we could have done so we are sharing his study and results here to help you understand the "why" when looking at web design.

The most surprising revelation was that design elements are exponentially more powerful than content, in terms of mistrust. When asked to describe why they mistrusted a website, 94% of comments were directly related to web design elements, while only 6% referenced specific content. While the study was directed towards health sites, it seems practical that the same basic principles would carry over to other industries. Specifically, here are some of the elements study participants pointed to when mistrusting a website:

- Busy or complex layouts
- Pop-up advertisements and flamboyant ads
- Small print that's hard to read
- Boring web design/lack of color
- Slow website intros and load times

Content Still Matters

Web design might be most important, but content is still vital. When those same participants were asked to provide reasons for why the trusted particular websites, content played a role in 83% of the answers. Participants liked sites that were informative, relevant, fresh, clear, and unbiased. They specifically enjoyed when sites gave age-specific information and provided answers for frequently asked questions.

The Far-Reaching Effects of Web Design

Both content and web design are incredibly important, and furthermore, they go hand-in-hand. Without quality design, your visitors likely won't take the time to read the content you've invested in. According to Darryl Stevens, CEO at [digiTech](#), a web design and internet marketing firm in Austin, Texas, "Web design must be viewed through the lens of your entire business, or it will fall flat." And while your site design should satisfy human eyes, it also impacts other areas of your business – specifically SEO, branding, and conversion rates.

The Web Design-SEO Relationship

When approaching web design with SEO in mind, you have to think long-term. Design trends come and go, but your brand and online presence will last much longer. Focusing too much on fleeting design trends can be problematic, but you also don't want to completely ignore current styles.

One of the most recent trends is parallax design, or the design that features a single page that seems to go on forever. Users like it because they can continuously scroll through content, while website owners prefer it because it keeps users engaged. Don't count on the search engines to be parallax fans, however. By removing the traditional website structure that search engines use to crawl, [you're raising obvious alarm bells](#). Additionally, you're spreading out an entire website's worth of keywords over a single URL. The parallax design may excite visitors today, but it could have negative consequences in the future.

On the opposite end of the spectrum you have responsive web design. With the future of internet searches trending in the mobile direction, the search engines are rewarding sites that invest in responsive web design. Not only does it reduce the risks of running two websites – which makes you susceptible to duplicate content – but it's [proven to lower bounce rates](#).

These are just a couple examples of how web design directly interacts with SEO, but there are dozens of other factors to keep in mind. From the amount of Flash you use to the structure of your HTML, every design feature has the potential to affect your search rankings.

Here we will look at the development process and how that will both occur and effect you. This is the section where you will learn about the moving production parts that culminate with the delivery of your digital business, Starting with the all-important wire frames!

There are 3 Easy Ways to Describe a Wireframe:

Wireframes are simple black and white layouts that outline the specific size and placement of page elements, site features, conversion areas, and navigation for your Web site.

They are devoid of color, font choices, logos or any real design elements that take away from purely focusing on a site's structure.

We often say that they are much like a blueprint to a home, where you can easily see the structural placement of your plumbing, electrical and other structural elements without any interior design treatments.

What Should Be in Your Wireframe:

Overlooking this step to get to the look and feel is a huge mistake that would prove disastrous for any web site. To reinforce the importance of this phase in a web process, I have outlined seven important reasons on why you need to wireframe.

1. Displays Site Architecture Visually

A sitemap can be a bit abstract, especially ones that are large. Taking the sitemap to wireframe starts the first concrete visual process for a project. Wireframes turn the abstract nature of a flow chart into something real and tangible without distractions. This step ensures that all parties are on the same page.

2. Allows for Clarification of Web Site Features

In many instances, clients may not understand what you mean when you say "dynamic slide show," "news feeds," "Google map integration," "product filtering," "light boxes" and hundreds of other types of features. Wire framing specific features on a web site provides clear communication to a client how these features will function, where they will live on the specific page and how useful they might actually be.

Sometimes you may decide to take out a feature once it is wireframed due to the fact that it just doesn't work with your site's goals. Seeing the features without any creative influence allows a client to focus on other important aspects of the project and clarifies any expectations about how features will be executed.

3. Pushes Usability to the Forefront

This is the one of the most important points of the entire wire framing process. Creating wireframes pushes usability to the forefront by showcasing page layouts at their core. It forces everyone to look objectively at a web site's ease of use, conversion paths, naming of links, navigation placement, and feature placement. Wireframes can point out flaws in your site architecture or how a specific feature may work.

4. Identifies Ease of Updates

For clients who purchase a content managed web site this point is especially important. A wireframe will immediately identify how well your site will handle content growth. For example, if you only have ten products offered right now, but in six months you may have 100, you will want your web site to accommodate this growth without impact to the website design, site architecture or usability. Wireframes will identify these important areas of content growth.

5. Helps Make the Design Process Iterative.

Instead of trying to combine the functionality/layout and creative/branding aspects of the website in one step, wireframes ensure that these elements are taken in one at a time. This allows clients (and other team members) to provide feedback earlier in the process. Skipping wireframes delays this feedback and increases the costs of making changes because full design mock-ups must be reworked, not just simplified wireframes.

6. Saves Time On the Entire Project

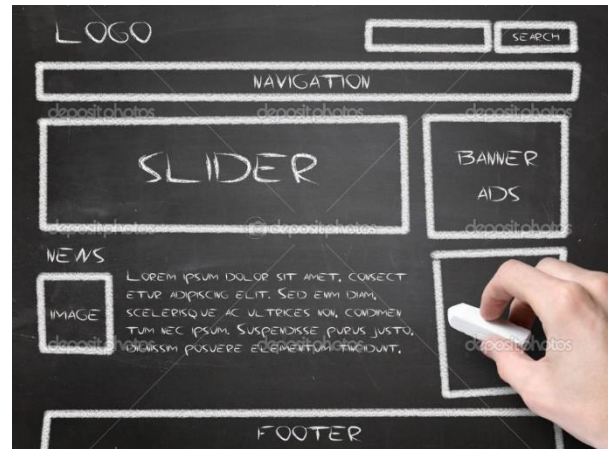
Wireframing saves time in a multitude of ways. Your designs are more calculated. Your development team understands what they are building. Content creation becomes much clearer. You avoid hacks later on in the process. Everyone from the web team, the agency and client are all on the same page about what the web site is supposed to do and how it is supposed to function.

7. Experience Shows It Works

Building a web site is a process. Wireframing is one of those parts of the web process that should not be skipped, just as you wouldn't build a house without a blueprint, or live in it without decoration. Each step has an important place in a larger process.

Now we can create the wireframes for the home page – an inner page and any special pages so we can create the navigation, the process can be as simple as this image below but saves hours in production time:

Once you have the pages defined that you require and the layout requirements roughed out then you are ready to set the site architecture with your menu/navigation. This can be sketched out as well. With wire frames in hand we can move on to developing those into your website and its pages.



Six Steps of the Web Site Design and Development Process

There are numerous steps in the web site design and development process. From gathering initial information, to the creation of your web site as we have done up to now in this phase, and finally to maintenance to keep your web site up to date and current. Let's take a look.

Step One: Information Gathering:

The first step in designing a successful web site is to gather information. Most of this we have done but let's see how it all ties in together now. Many things need to be taken into consideration when we designed the look and feel of your site, we first asked a lot of questions to help us understand your business and your needs in a web site then we created your wireframes.

Certain things we considered were:

Purpose: What is the purpose of the site? Do you want to provide information, promote a service, sell a product?

Goals: What do you hope to accomplish by building this web site? Two of the more common goals are either to make money or share information.

Target Audience: Is there a specific group of people that will help you reach your goals? It is helpful to picture the "ideal" person you want to visit your web site. Consider their age, sex or interests – this will help us determine the best design style for your site.

Content: What kind of information will the target audience be looking for on your site? Are they looking for specific information, a particular product or service...?

Step Two: Planning

Using the information gathered, we put together a plan for your web site.

Here we developed a site map – a list of all main topic areas of the site, as well as sub-topics (if applicable). This gave us a guide as to what content would be on the site, and was essential to develop a consistent, easy to understand navigational system. This was also the point where we decide what technologies should be implemented – interactive forms, CMS (content management system) such as WordPress, etc.

Step Three: Design

Drawing from the information gathered up to this point, we determined the look and feel of the site. Target audience was one of the key factors taken into consideration here. A site aimed at teenagers, for example, would look much different than one meant for a financial institution. We also incorporated elements such as the company logo or colors to help strengthen the identity of your company and brand on the web site.

In this phase, communication is crucial to ensure that the final web site will match your needs and taste. We work together in this way, exchanging ideas, until we arrive at the final deliverable for the site.

Step Four: Development

This is where the web site itself is created. We take all of the individual graphic elements from the prototype and use them to create the functional web site. We also take your content and distribute it throughout the site, in the appropriate areas like landing pages and social channels.

Step Five: Testing and Delivery

At this point, we attend to the final details and test your web properties. We test things such as the complete functionality of forms or other scripts, we test for last minute compatibility issues (viewing differences between different web browsers or devices), ensuring that the site is optimized to be viewed properly in the most recent browser versions and devices.

Once we receive your final approval, it is time to deliver the site. We upload the files to your server (ours if we are hosting for you) – in most cases, this also involves installing and configuring WordPress, along with a core set of essential plugins to help enhance the site. Here, we test to make sure that all files have been uploaded correctly, and that the site is fully functional. This marks the official launch of your site, as it is now viewable to the public.

The next step in Development is to bring your brand into the other facets/areas of your digital business outside your website – let's start with your social media accounts and profiles.

SETUP OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

Setting up your social accounts properly from the beginning is the best way to have them build relationship between your potential customers and your business. Did you know that 4 of the top 10 sites on the web are social media sites?

It's no secret that social media sites are a massive hub for traffic. How many people do you know that

look at their Facebook account on a daily basis? We'd guess almost everyone you know would fall in to that category. Which is why it's vital for your business to be listed and optimized for these sites.

When your target market sees your brand frequently they begin to trust you. Then when their friends are recommending and talking about you that trust grows even more and makes your business the clear choice!

These days, social media marketing is so important to your brand, content strategy and SEO, so it must be incorporated into each strategy as a whole. Online marketing consists of many different aspects of web design, SEO, speed and social media marketing. Posts and images can be linked to your social pages and social page posts and images back to your website. Once set up correctly, this can have a positive effect on search results for your company and relevance for your potential customers (searchers)

If you are going to create social media channels for your business, it's important to make sure they are set up properly. I can't tell you how many businesses I search for online that have incomplete or poorly set up social media channels. Having channels that do not reflect a professional image will hurt your business more than they will help it.

Your brand should look the same in every place it appears online. It will serve you well to establish some standard guidelines for setting up your social media channels, so that your company is easily recognizable and looks sharp online. Here are three key things you must do to make sure your business profiles stand out from your competitors.

Have a Consistent Profile Picture:

Every single social media channel is going to require a profile picture of some kind. Choose a picture of yourself, or a logo, and use it on every single channel. Be sure it's a clean, quality picture or image and fits nicely when you upload it. If you don't have a professional headshot, I highly recommend that you get one. This will add a lot of credibility to your business. Cropping yourself out of a family photo never looks good.

Have a Consistent and Relevant Cover Photo:

Cover photos are just as ubiquitous as profile pictures. Nearly every single social media channel has a spot for one. It's important to choose a picture or a graphic that represents your brand. The cover photo is a little trickier than the profile picture in that each social media channel's dimensions are a little different. If you aren't graphically inclined, consider hiring someone to help make each photo fit just right.

Have a Standard and Consistent About Section:

Just like a profile picture and cover photo, there is going to be an 'about' section on each social media channel for you to be able to talk about your business. Write a standard 'about' section and use it on each channel. This, too, might need to be tweaked, depending on the channel. For example, Twitter gives you a limited number of characters for your bio.

Having a consistent message, image and linking to your website will strengthen your brand on social media and allow visitors to immediately recognize your company, whether they see you on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or any other channel.

Setup of Social Accounts:

We have already discussed the reason that social media is important and addressed the channels that are best suited to your business. In the production section we will review the process and what we will be doing development wise for your social channels.

Social Media Setup and ongoing Social Marketing:

Facebook Includes:

- Set up a Facebook Page or review and enhance an existing Page
- Create required "Cover Photo" for the Page
- Create required Profile Photo & avatar thumbnail
- Set up a unique, permanent URL for Page
- Populate the About section with a short organizational description, full address info, location on map, phone number, contact email address, website address, link to twitter account, hours of operation, year founded, categorization
- Upload some photos of organization (e.g. outside photos, inside photos, staff photos)
- Create initial welcome post on Page
- Create post(s) informing users of organization's Twitter account, website address, and initial photos.

Twitter Includes:

- Set up a Twitter Account or review and enhance an existing Account
- Create required "Header Image" for the Account
- Create required Profile Photo
- Populate Account details with: short organizational bio, website address, email address
- Create initial welcome tweet
- Create tweet(s) informing users of organization's Facebook Page, website address, some photos.

LinkedIn Includes:

- Set up a company profile on LinkedIn for your organization
- Create required "Cover Photo" for the Page
- Create required Profile Photo & avatar thumbnail
- Create optional large image of organization
- Create the two required logo images (horizontal and square versions)
- Configure company type, full address info, contact info, description, categorization, company size

Instagram Includes:

- Set up a Company Profile for your organization
- Create optional large image of organization
- Create the two required logo images (horizontal and square versions)
- Configure company type, full address info, contact info, description, categorization, company size

YouTube Includes:

- Set up a YouTube Account or review and enhance an existing Account
- Create required separate control email address, Google account and related G+ page (required by YouTube)
- Create an associated YouTube Channel for the Account
- Configure a number of parameters for the YouTube Account and the Channel
- Create required large "Channel Art Image" for the Account
- Create required Profile Photo
- Populate Account details with: short organizational bio, website address, social media account address(es)
- If you already have at least one video, upload and populate fields for your first video (optional)

CRM SETUP & EMAIL MARKETING PLATFORM

Email Marketing and CRM systems are not new to successful businesses; they are essential – why businesses have been slower to adopt integration of these system with their online marketing is bewildering at best.

Marketing automation platforms are fantastic for helping you automate marketing processes and centralize marketing collateral (i.e. emails, landing pages and hosted content). But if you want to take your marketing automation experience to the next level, you must integrate your marketing platform with your customer relationship management (CRM) system.

Tight integration with your CRM system will allow you to transfer lead information seamlessly between marketing and sales, ensuring you present the right messages at the right time. Better alignment between marketing and sales will improve the effectiveness of campaigns, and provide a stronger return on your software – and marketing – investments.

Editorial Calendars – Content Production Phase

Putting out fresh, relevant content is more than a good idea for companies, it's a vital step in achieving business success. Through content, you can engage prospects and customers, increase search results for your website, enhance branding, and more. So how do you get started? It all begins with building a content calendar that is based on your overall content strategy.

Here's a look at a standard 3 step process to map your content to the sales cycle — for both current and prospective customers, we can use this so our editorial calendar/s provides us with a quick overview of your content marketing strategy and outlines exactly what tasks need to be completed and when over the coming year.

Step 1: Look at Your Sales Cycle

The first step in creating your content calendar is to understand the phases of your company's sales cycle. Say you're a commercial cleaning company. Ask yourself how people become your customers. Do they find you through pay-per-click ads on search pages? Television advertising? Word-of-mouth referrals from other clients? Talk to your salespeople and find out what your typical lead-to-conversion cycle looks like. Say it's typically online marketing from your sales team, followed by an in-person meeting with interested parties, and then personalized sales packets that propose custom cleaning plans. You'd want to identify

key demographics in the timeline, such as new leads (the people seeing your online ads), interested prospects (the people who contact you for more info), new customers, returning customers, former customers, etc. These will be the categories to which you allocate topics.

We need to take the time to learn as much about these different areas as we can. If your new leads come primarily through online ads, we will spend time finding out about the prospects who respond to them. Once we've gathered data on these groups of clients, we are ready to start planning the content you will target them with.

Step 2: Brainstorm Topics and Align Them to Categories

After we've nailed down the stages of prospects in your sales cycle, the next step is brainstorming topics for them. If you are a commercial cleaning company, think about the concerns that facility managers may have that would prompt a visit from your salespeople. For example: Are they worried about whether or not you'll be able to manage the damage from heavy traffic in their hallways? Are they concerned about LEED certification issues? Bam! You've got ideas to fill your content calendar with topics that address their needs. So your list for this stage of the sales cycle might look like the following:

- Keeping Your Facility in Stunning Shape
- How to Make a Strong First Impression in Your Entryway
- What Happens When You Have a Last-Minute Cleaning Emergency
- How to Manage Weather Damage to Your Carpeting
- The Ins and Outs of LEED Certification
- Sustainable Cleaning Practices

We'll devise lists like these for each stage of the sales cycle. Once you have exhausted all your ideas, you can move to step three.

Step 3: Set Up Your Content Calendar

Pull out a spreadsheet content calendar and start scheduling content into it. There are many different types of content, so don't think the list should be only blog topics, or only email newsletters, or only pay-per-click advertising. Consider all these different types, too:

- Photos
- Videos
- Case studies
- Social media updates
- Infographics
- Charts
- eBooks

Talk with your salespeople to find out the best frequency, time of day, day of the week, etc., for delivering your content so we plan your content calendar accordingly. You can also ask them for their advice on building your topic ideas into useful content that will serve your audience's needs. So, for example, your topics that cater to interested prospects might need to be seasonal (i.e., relating to different weather damage in different seasons, etc.). Consider the following factors:

- How seasonality affects your business
- Industry trends, conferences, events
- Timing of new product launches
- Company news and announcements

After we've taken the three steps outlined above, we start putting your content into place. Writing the articles, making the videos, schedule the ad campaigns, and so on. Monitor the results of your efforts, and continually refine and adjust the type and schedule of content accordingly.

Have Separate Editorial Calendars to Track Specifics of All Other Content Types

We recommend that we have separate spreadsheets or tabs for each specific type of content being created. For instance, you may have one tab for your blog, another for your newsletter and another for the additional types of content we create, such as eBooks, white papers and case studies. How we break this up will depend on how we decide to best manage each of these content types.

Each of the separate tabs includes more specifics about all of the content activities you have planned and will vary based on what you offer.

For instance, if you have a blog, you may want a specific tab that tracks all of the info for each post, such as:

- Post date
- Author
- Tentative title
- Keywords
- Categories
- Tags
- Call to action
- Status

Tracking more than topic and date helps you make sure to include the key elements you need for SEO, digital optimization, and conversion. Remember it's all a web and each moving cog requires the other to remember its role and impact.

Use Your Editorial Calendar to Track Content Ideas

While outside the technical scope of an editorial calendar, we also like to track a few other types of content in separate tabs:

- Existing content we can use as a call to action
- Ideas for content we can repurpose
- Ideas for new content (we have an additional tab that we use to track blog post ideas)
- Content we can curate

Use an Editorial Calendar to Help with Complex Buying Cycles

On a final note, if you are a B2B marketer who is helping customers progress through a complex buying cycle, we suggest that you track additional details such as the following:

- **Cliffhanger:** In what way have you created anticipation for future engagement? (e.g., coming next month we'll share... Or, sign up for our series on X)
- **Buying stage:** Status Quo, Priority, Research, Options, Step Back, Validation, Choice
- **Distribution:** website, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, blog, nurture email send, syndication, etc. This will also include notes about linkages to other content on the calendar (e.g., this blog post links to the registration page for that webinar)

- **Accompaniments:** Includes messaging for related emails in the case of nurture sends, associated Tweets, landing page content for white papers, webinar invitation text and registration page content, etc.

The CRM Integration Basics

Integration between your marketing automation system and CRM system should be bi-directional. In other words, your CRM system should talk to your marketing automation platform and your marketing automation platform should talk to your CRM system. For example, if you have your website's "Contact Us" form integrated into your marketing automation platform, the data submitted via that form submission should be replicated in your CRM system.

On the flip side, if your organization is making regular updates to their customer and prospect records within the CRM system, that data should sync back to your marketing automation platform. This ensures there is consistency in the data between the two systems. For example, let's say a sales rep is speaking with a prospect. The prospect's title is entered as Marketing Coordinator in the CRM system, but the rep learns it is actually Director of Marketing. You will want the ability to update the record to reflect the proper title, then have that information synced back with your marketing automation platform. This is important when it comes to database segmentation, lead nurturing and lead scoring.

How does this work? It begins with a process of mapping fields from your CRM system into your marketing automation system. Some marketing automation vendor's offer automated mapping with major CRM systems (e.g. Salesforce.com). Others will manually map CRM data into the marketing automation system. After the initial mapping, data added or changed in one system will automatically update in the other. This bi-directional synchronization can occur in real-time, though large systems may update at intervals up to 15 minutes. Synchronization frequency can also be controlled by the user.

Taking Your Integration to the Next Level

If you are looking to take your marketing and sales efforts to the next level, you will want to consider advanced integration activities. Here is a list of 6 advanced functions you can perform by integrating your CRM and marketing automation systems:

1. **Activity Alerts:** The marketing automation system will send an alert to sales reps when a lead performs a certain behaviour, such as visiting a web page.
2. **Assign Leads to Sales Reps:** Users can create rules in the marketing automation system that will assign and transfer a new lead to a sales rep based on certain criteria.
3. **Campaign Integration:** Campaigns from the marketing automation system will synchronize with the CRM system so that you can tie revenue back to campaigns to measure ROI.
4. **Campaign Triggers:** Campaigns can be triggered based on certain lead behaviour's or changes in the CRM system. Lack of contact, for example, could trigger a campaign.
5. **Send Leads Based on Campaign Rule:** The marketing automation system will send a lead to sales reps through the CRM system after a lead completes an activity in a campaign flow.

6. Send Leads Based on Score: The marketing automation system can send a lead to sales reps through the CRM system when the lead reaches a specific lead score.

4 DISTRIBUTION | How you get in front of your market and stay there!

Now you have all the information you need to launch YOUR business digitally and successfully online:

1. You've established your **brand** – Look, voice, presence
2. You've designed your **website** and wire framed exactly what goes into it
3. You've made decisions on **content** and know what you want to say and share.
4. You've discovered which **social** channels you will use and how you will use them as well as how you will manage them.
5. You've made **advertising** decisions both search and social based and you have set a budget for each.
6. You've looked at **systems** and **processes** to run your business and have made decisions which ones work best for you.

Now it's time to tie it all together, to take action and dominate your share of your online market! Make notes below to assist you in determining who in your team is going to manage which aspect of your digital business plan and what you want to manage yourself – then take action and start reaping your rewards!

Digital Website Distribution:

Search Engine Optimization – Show up online organically & Cut your Advertising costs!

Paid Search Advertising – Get your business in front of your customers TODAY!

Paid Social Advertising – Make sales and Build Relationships for your Sales Funnels!

Digital Content Distribution:

Social Platforms – Save time by automating and delegating!

Offsite Publishing – Build trust and Reputation, be the master to your customer!

Email Marketing – Nurture and Support potential customers to become realized!

Managing Business Development and Sales:

Using your CRM – Transparent Management of your Business, Relationships and Sales!

Dominating your Market!

Now you have all the elements of a well thought out digital business plan for entrepreneurs or small businesses with all of the components you require and you're ready to act. How do you distribute that, manage that, capture your market share and maintain/grow your results?

That is where you need a team, much like the team I put together over the last 15 years. It's pretty daunting for one individual or entrepreneur to manage all of these aspects themselves, that is where team becomes essential.

YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING TEAM

Below is a glimpse of what a strong digital business team looks like, made up of Professional Branding & Digital Marketing Experts that will be working hard each month/year for you to ensure your business is properly branded, showing up across multiple channels online and in front of your exact target market to make you money. The end goal is to supercharge and grow your business so you receive a fantastic (ROI) Return on Investment!

Standard Team Members for a Digital Business:

✓ Graphic Designers	✓ Social Media Manager
✓ Logo Designers	✓ Digital Marketing Strategists
✓ Website Designers	✓ Email Marketing Experts
✓ Website Coders	✓ Video Director, Producers & Editors & Professional Photographers
✓ Project Manager	✓ Paid Search Manager (PPC)
✓ Account Manager	✓ Search Engine Optimization
✓ Professional Content Writers	✓ Analytics Experts
✓ Social Media Strategist	✓ Certified Google Professionals

Don't let this intimidate you – it may appear like a LOT to access a team, though this is where the power of outsourcing makes it attainable whether you're IBM or you're an entrepreneur with a home office.

You can access this team (20+ experts) for the cost of one single full time employee or less per year!

It's like having a built-in marketing team right inside your business for an affordable price. It's not possible for one person to be an expert in all these fields of branding and digital marketing. You would definitely need many people to execute what you need to grow or ramp up your business and now you can do all of this for a fraction of the price. Now Entrepreneurs and Small businesses can do **BIG** business affordably.

How?

You can tap into my rolodex of professionals that I have been building up, testing and working with successfully for the last 15 years around the globe in Asia Pacific, Eastern Europe, Great Britain, Ukraine, North America and Australia.

Regardless of your budget – there are outsourcing solutions available to build your dream team and grow your business online! If you want to partner with me and access my resources, contact me here:

Email me: donnathecoach@gmail.com

Phone me: 1-647-551-0409

Join forces with me and let's get your team building your business so you can start reaping those rewards today!

For those of you that want to go it on your own here is a list of some of my favorite resources:

Resources:

Now you have all the information you need to launch YOUR business digitally and successfully online here are my resource recommendations to get you going:

Brand: Look, Voice, Presence:

1. <http://www.doublearrow.co.uk/manual.htm>
2. http://www.channel4.com/about_c4/styleguide/downloads/C4StyleGuide1.1.pdf
3. http://issuu.com/bondo/docs/skype_brand_book_-_look
4. http://images.apple.com/legal/certification/docs/logo_guidelines.pdf
5. http://brandcenterdl.adobe.com/Corpmktg/Brandmktg/Campaign_Assets/guidelines/corporate/corporate_brand_guidelines.pdf
6. <https://standardsmanual.com/>
7. <http://www.barbican.org.uk/media/upload/about%20barbican/0Barbican-Brand-Guidelines-May07.pdf>
8. <http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/styleguide/identity/firefox/branding/>
9. <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/310-0231.pdf>
10. http://www.easy.com/PDFs/easyGroup_Brand_Manual.pdf

Website & Wire Frames: Designing Your Website and Landing Page/s

1. http://www.easy.com/PDFs/easyGroup_Brand_Manual.pdf
2. <http://www.axure.com/>
3. <https://pidoco.com/en>
4. <https://products.office.com/en-CA/visio?legRedir=true&CorrelationId=575afd13-06a8-451d-8825-b117505d7890>
5. <http://www.adobe.com/products/indesign.html?PID=7609893>
6. <http://iplotz.com/>
7. Or if you are like keep it simple and just sketch it by hand, take a photo or scan it and send it to the designer / developer.

Content: What You Want to Say and Share.

1. <http://curationsuite.com/>
2. <https://www.shuttlerock.com/>
3. <http://go.stackla.com/>
4. <http://www.youbrandinc.com/ultimate-lists/ultimate-list-content-curation-tools-platform/>

Social: Automating Your Social Content Uncurated

1. <http://www.socialbro.com/>

2. <http://www.hootsuite.com>
3. <https://bottlenose.com/>
4. www.keymedia.com
5. www.buffer.com

Advertising: Search and Social Based Paid Advertising.

1. <http://www.perrymarshall.com>
2. <http://www.bruceclay.com>
3. <https://www.stefanmaescher.com/online-advertising/> Great resource
4. <http://planetoocean.com/> The BIBLE of online marketing!
5. <https://www.searchengineneeds.com/> a must read!

Systems: Processes to Run Your Business Automate the Heavy Lifting for You

1. <http://www.nutshell.com> The perfect starter CRM – Love it!
2. <http://www.zoho.com> The entire shebang CRM ++ for small to mid-size business!
3. <http://www.teamwork.com> For more advanced users – my Favorite! Integrated Support Desk and Amazing support!
4. <https://basecamp.com/> Great for beginners and easy to upgrade from.